THE

DUTY

OF

National Covenanting

EXPLAINED,

In some SERMONS preached at the Renovation of our Covenants, National and Solemn League, in the Bond adapted to our present Situation and Circumstances in this Period, by the Associate Presbytery, at *Abernethy*, in the Month of *July* 1744.

By Mr. ALEXANDER MONCRIEFF Minister of the Gospel there.

Jer. l. 4, 5. *In those Days, and in that Time, saith the Lord, the Children of* Israel *shall come, they and the Children of* Judah *together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the Lord their God. They shall ask the Way to* Zion *with their Faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord, in a perpetual Covenant that shall not be forgotten.*

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November 3. 1744.

TO THE

People of my paſtoral Charge.

THESE Notes were taken from my Mouth, in the ſhort Hand, by one of the Hearers, when they were delivered unto you. I am ſenſible they labour under many Defects, but I am willing they be put into your Hands in the familiar Way in which they were preached to you, hoping that the Lord may, of his Grace, condeſcend to bleſs them, to bring to your Remembrance the ſolemn Vows you are come under to the moſt high God, and to excite you to an habitual Dependence upon the Grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus, to enable you daily to perform them. I have hereto ſubjoined the Bond you have come under.

'WE, *all and every one of us*, though ſenſible 'of the Deceitfulneſs and Unbelief of 'our own Hearts, and however frequently per-'plexed with Doubts and Fears anent our ac-'tual Believing; yet, deſiring to eſſay, in the 'Lord's Strength, and in Obedience to his Com-'mand, to glorify God, by believing his Word

'of

' of Grace contained in his Covenant of Promise,
' and, in the Faith of his Promise, to devote our-
' selves unto the Lord in a Covenant of Duty ;
' *We do*, with our Hands lifted up to the MOST
' HIGH GOD, hereby profess, and, before God,
' Angels and Men, solemnly declare, That, through
' the Grace of God, and according to the Measure
' of his Grace given unto us, We do, with our
' whole Hearts, take hold of the LORD JESUS
' CHRIST, as the only Propitiation for our Sins ;
' his *Righteousness*, as the only Foundation of our
' Access to and Acceptance with God ; his *Co-*
' *venant* of free and rich Promises, as our only
' Charter for the heavenly Inheritance ; his *Word*
' for our perfect and only Rule of Faith and Prac-
' tice ; his SPIRIT for our alone Guide, to lead
' us into all Truth revealed in his holy Word,
' unto which nothing, at any Time, is to be ad-
' ded, whether by new Revelations of the Spirit or
' Traditions of Men. We avouch the LORD to
' be our GOD, and, in the Strength of his promi-
' sed Grace, we *promise and swear*, by the GREAT
' NAME OF THE LORD OUR GOD, That
' we shall walk in his Way, keep his Judgments
' and Commandments, and hearken to his Voice :
' And, particularly, that we shall, by the Lord's
' Grace, continue and abide in the Profession, Faith
' and Obedience of the foresaid true reformed Re-
' ligion, in Doctrine, Worship, Presbyterial
' Church-Government and Discipline ; and that
' we shall, according to our several Stations,
' Places and Callings, contend and testify against
' all contrary Evils, Errors and Corruptions, par-
' ticularly, *Popery*, *Prelacy*, *Deism*, *Arianism*,
' *Arminianism*, and every Error subversive to the
' Doctrine of Grace ; as also *Independency*, *Latitudi-*
' *narian*

' *narian Tenets*, and the other Evils named in the ' above Confeſſion of Sins.

' In like Manner, *we promiſe and ſwear*, That, by ' all Means which are lawful and warrantable for ' us, according to the Word of God, the approv- ' en and received Standards of this Church, and ' our known Principles, we ſhall, in our ſeveral ' Stations and Callings, endeavour the Reformati- ' on of Religion in *England* and *Ireland*, in Doc- ' trine, Worſhip, Diſcipline and Government, ac- ' cording to the Word of God; and to promote ' and advance our covenanted Conjunction and U- ' niformity in Religion, Confeſſion of Faith and ' Catechiſms, Form of Church-Government, and ' Directory for Worſhip, as theſe were received by ' this Church.

' And, in regard we are taught by the Word of ' God, and bound by our Covenants, National and ' Solemn League, to live together in the Fear of ' God, and in Love one to another, and to encou- ' rage one another in the Work and Cauſe of the ' Lord; and that, denying all Ungodlineſs and ' worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſ- ' ly and godly in this preſent World: Therefore, ' in a Dependence on the Lord's Grace and ' Strength, We, in the ſame Manner, do *promiſe* ' and *ſwear* that we ſhall, in our ſeveral Places and ' Callings, encourage and ſtrengthen one another's ' Hands, in purſuing our End and Deſign of this ' our ſolemn Oath and Covenant; and that we ' ſhall endeavour a Life and Converſation becom- ' ing the Goſpel of Chriſt: And that, in our per- ' ſonal Callings and particular Families, we ſhall ' ſtudy to be good Examples to one another of ' Godlineſs and Righteouſneſs, and of every Duty ' that we owe to God and Man; and that we ſhall

' not

' not give up ourſelves to a deteſtable Indifference
' and Neutrality in the Cauſe of God; but, deny-
' ing ourſelves, and our own Things, we ſhall, a-
' bove all Things, ſeek the Honour of God, and
' the Good of his Cauſe and People; and that,
' through Grace, forſaking the Counſels of Fleſh
' and Blood, and not leaning upon carnal Confi-
' dences, we ſhall endeavour to depend upon the
' Lord, to walk by the Rule of his Word, and
' to hearken to his Voice by his Servants. In
' all which, profeſſing our own Weakneſs, we
' earneſtly pray to God, who is the Father of
' Mercies, through his Son Jeſus Chriſt, to
' be merciful unto us, and to enable us, by the
' Power of his holy Spirit, that we may do our Du-
' ty, unto the Praiſes of his Grace in the Churches.
' *Amen.*'

Extracted——

JOHN POTTS *Pr. Cls.*

ISAIAH

Isaiah xix. 18.

In that Day shall five Cities in the Land of Egypt *swear to the Lord of Hosts.*

IN the preceeding Part of this Chapter you have an Account of awful Judgments denounced against *Egypt*. In this Verse, and what follows in the Chapter, you have an Account of Mercy reserved for *Egypt* in Gospel-Days. *Egypt* was enlightened by the Gospel early after our Lord's Ascension into Heaven, by the Ministry of some of the Preachers of the Gospel of Christ: And under the Name of *Egypt*, and the Promises of the Grace of God made unto it, is likeways included the Conversion of the Heathen and Gentile Nations in Gospel-Days, in those very Places of the World where Pagan Darkness hath prevailed to the greatest Height; for, by the Gospel of the Grace of God, the People that sat in Darkness see a great Light, and to those that were in the Shadow of Death, Light springs up.

In these Words, then, we may remark these few Things following. In the *1st* Place, there is a Duty, and a solemn Part of religious Worship, which is to be performed and given to God in *Egypt*, now by Grace brought into a Church-State: *Five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *shall swear to the Lord*

Lord of Hosts. They shall not only swear by him, in a Way of Appeal unto him, as is ordinarily done for putting an End to Controversies between Man and Man, but they shall swear Allegiance to him: They shall enter into a Covenant of Duty, founded upon, and in consequence of their taking hold of his Covenant of Grace and Promise.

2*dly*. You have the Season of this Duty; *In that Day*. The Gospel-Day, which is frequently pointed out in Scripture by *that Day*, as in *Zech*. xii. 10, 11. and xiii. 1. *In that Day, when the Son of Righteousness shall arise with Healing in his Wings. In that Day, when the Day-Spring from on high shall visit the Heathen Nations and the Land of* Egypt. *Egypt* in particular: *In that Day shall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *swear to the Lord of Hosts*. Thus we see swearing to the Lord of Hosts is a Duty under the New Testament as well as it was under the Old.

3*dly*. You have the Parties engaged and employed in this Part of solemn Worship. They are but a few; five Cities in the Land of *Egypt*. There were many Cities in the Land of *Egypt*, yet but five of a great many Cities do swear to the Lord, and engage in this necessary Duty of vowing to the Lord. And this teacheth us, by the Way, that it is the Duty of a few, of a Remnant in a Land, to avouch the Lord for their God: Though the great Bulk of the Land or Generation should be chargeable with slighting or opposing Reformation-Work, it must not hinder us from doing our Duty, in renewing our Covenant-Engagements to the Lord: Tho' few in the Land join in this Work, yet a few of many have God's Warrant, in his Strength, to essay the Duty of vowing and swearing to *Jacob*'s mighty God. Five Cities in idolatrous

trous *Egypt*, that were Heathens and Outcasts Strangers to the Covenant of Promise, when Gospel-Light shines in *Egypt*, and they are enlightened by it, they shall swear to the Lord of Hosts. Our Fathers in these Lands served other Gods; they bowed to and worshipped Stocks and Stones under Pagan Darkness, and were involved in the gross Idolatry of the Church of *Rome* under Popish Darkness; and at this Day Heathenism, Deism, Atheism, *Socinian* and *Arminian* Errors have overspread the Land, and a Way is paved for introducing the Idolatry and Superstition of *Rome* which already has got great Entertainment in many Places, as appears from the open Saying of Mass, and the Growth of Popery in the Land: Yet, notwithstanding the lamentable Condition our Fathers were in under Popish Darkness, when the Lord did clear their Sky, they entred into a Covenant of Duty, to oppose the Superstitions of Popery, Prelacy, and every other Evil contrary to the Word of God, and to walk with God, and cleave to him. And altho' these Lands, at this Day, are over-run with the above Errors and Abominations, yet five Cities, a few in these Lands, are warranted to swear to the Lord of Hosts.

4*thly*. In this Verse we have a Qualification of the Covenanters and those that swear to the Lord of Hosts, namely, they are a People that speak the Language of *Canaan; five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *shall speak the Language of* Canaan. The Scripture Language was the Language of *Canaan*; the *Jews* had the same Dialect in which the Scriptures were written; and those who speak the Language of *Canaan*, are such who prize the Word of God, and duly read the same; those who meditate upon the Word of God, those who rejoice in his

Word, as those who find great Spoil; who speak about the Truths of his Word, the Doctrines of his Word, and who meditate upon the great Things of his Law. They who speak the Language of *Canaan*, speak concerning Christ, who is the very Substance of the whole Word: They have a Savour of Christ in their Words and Actions, and in their whole Conversation; and their Speaking the Language of *Canaan* supposes they are Citizens of *Canaan*, Citizens of *Zion*; for every Country speaks its own Language; and it supposes they have been born in *Zion*, born from above, and are the Children of *Zion*, who are joyful in their King. It must be the renewed Heart that will or can speak the new Dialect, the Language of *Canaan*, for out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh. And this sheweth who will be true Covenanters, namely, those who have their Conversation in some Measure in Heaven, and speak the Language of *Canaan*. They are far from speaking the Language of *Canaan* who savour just of this Earth, and speak about their worldly Affairs on the Lord's Day, and make Intimation of their Roups, and the like, on the Lord's Day; a Practice which has too much prevailed, even in this Place; but, be it known unto you all, we, in the Lord's Name, forbid and discharge any Person whatsoever to be guilty of such a Practice for the future on the Lord's Day, by placading their Papers on the Church-Doors, or otherways intimating them, on that holy Day. You who are on your Journey to *Canaan*, no Wonder you speak the Language of *Canaan*; it is your Country you are going to, and no Wonder you speak the Language of your Country; you are Strangers on Earth, but you look for a better Country, that is, an heavenly.

5 *thly*. You

5thly. You have the Object of all religious Worſhip, and of this Part of religious Worſhip in particular, namely, the Lord of Hoſts. *They ſhall ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts;* to *Jehovah*, who has all the Hoſts and Armies in Heaven and Earth at his Command, and who doth what he pleaſeth in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth. He alone is the ſole and only Object of all divine Worſhip and Adoration. It is God, then, we have to do with in renewing our Covenant-Engagements.

6thly. You have the Form in which this Duty is taught us, and delivered to us, namely, in the Form of a Promiſe. Five Cities in the Land of *Egypt* ſhall ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts. Not only is it a warrantable Duty, but it is a Duty wrapt in a Promiſe, which importeth that the Lord will aſſiſt his People in the Diſcharge of this Duty. He has undertaken for their Furniture; *they ſhall ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts.* If any Duty, or this ſolemn Duty, were left to our Management, we would make a ſad Account of it; but *Jehovah*, our God, has taken it in Hand; *they ſhall ſwear unto the Lord of Hoſts.*

Laſtly, In this Verſe you have the Term or Deſignation which one of theſe Cities ſhall have; one of them ſhall be called *The City of Deſtruction*, or, *The City of the Sun*, as ſome render it; one of them ſhall be called, *The City of Light*, or, *of the Valley of Viſion;* or one of them ſhall be called, *The City of Deſtruction;* that is, one of them, or all of them put together, will be reckoned by their Neighbours, the Men of the World, to be Cities of Deſtruction, a ſelf-ruining People, bringing Deſtruction upon themſelves, when they ſee them taking joyfully the ſpoiling of their Goods for Chriſt

and

and his Cauſe; or we may take it thus, The Men of the World will ſeek to bring Deſtruction upon them, becauſe they are a People that are employed in witneſſing for, and ſwearing unto the Lord of Hoſts; a Work which the Men of the World bear a great Hatred unto, becauſe a Teſtimony againſt a Courſe of Defection is tormenting to the Men that dwell on the Earth.

From theſe Words, thus explained, we obſerve the following Doctrine.

That, as it is the Duty of the Church and People of God, in New Teſtament Times, to renew their national Vows and Covenants, tho' they be but a few in Number compared with the Oppoſers of a Work of Reformation; ſo they may warrantably truſt a promiſing God, that he will enable them to perform that Duty to the Praiſe of his Grace.

In that Day ſhall five Cities in the Land of Egypt *ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts.*

In diſcourſing this Doctrine we ſhall endeavour, by the Lord's Aſſiſtance, *firſt*, to offer ſome Remarks concerning this moral, neceſſary and ſeaſonable Duty of renewing our Covenant-Engagements, and ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts.

2*dly*. Shew that this is a Duty in New Teſtament Times, and even when the witneſſing Remnant are the ſmaller Part, and but a few, compared with the Oppoſers of Reformation-Work.

3*dly*. Speak of this ſolemn Part of religious Worſhip, vowing and ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts.

4*thly*. Shew that we have a good Ground and Warrant to truſt a promiſing God, that he will

will enable us to perform this Duty of vowingad ſwearing to him, to the Praiſe of his Grace.

5thly. Make ſome Application.

We proceed then to the firſt Thing propoſed, namely, by divine Aſſiſtance to offer ſome Remarks concerning this moral, neceſſary and ſeaſonable Duty of renewing our Covenant-Engagements, and ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts.

And (1) we remark, that the Oath of God which we are to enter into, is not the Covenant of Grace, but it is a Covenant of Duty and Gratitude; and all that have taken hold of the Covenant of Grace are obliged to devote themſelves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty. There muſt be Faith in Chriſt in the firſt Place, and, in conſequence of that, there ought to be an open Profeſſing of our Faith in him and Obedience to him. When *Gideon* and *Jephtah* had wrought great Deliverances in *Iſrael*, what was the Voice of the People? Why, it was, *Rule thou over us*. Chriſt has wrought a great Salvation, and all the Citizens of *Zion* deſire him to rule over them, and they truſt and confide in him alone; as it was ſaid by *Boaz* to *Ruth*, *Bleſſed art thou of the Lord, ſeeing thou art come to truſt under the Wings of the God of* Iſrael. The very Nature of Faith is juſt a Truſting *Immanuel*; and it is the Voice of all the People who are helped by Grace to act Faith on him, *Rule thou over us*. Their Voice is ſuch as that of the Men who came to *David* in the Hold. *The Spirit of the Lord came upon* Amazai, *and he ſaid, Thine are we, O* David, *and on thy Side, thou Son of* Jeſſe, 1 Chron. xii. We ſay, it is not the Covenant of Grace, but a Covenant of Duty, which is founded upon, and conſequential of our taking hold of the Covenant of Grace.

For,

For, in the *firſt* Place, the Covenant of Grace is a Bundle of precious Promiſes, which God hath undertaken to perform to us for Chriſt's Sake. The Covenant of Duty is a Bundle of Duties, which, as inſtated in Chriſt our new Covenant and ſanctifying Head, we do promiſe in his Strength to do and perform. 2*dly*. The Covenant of Grace never was, and never ſhall, nor can be broken, becauſe the Parties contracting in it are *Jehovah* the Father on Heaven's Side, and *Jehovah* the Son on Man's Side, as may be ſeen in the 89 *Pſalm* throughout. But our Covenant of Duty and Gratitude is frequently broken, and needs to be renewed. 3*dly*. The Covenant of Grace, as it ſtands faſt with Chriſt, is the Ground of all our Faith, Hope and Confidence before God: But our Covenant of Duty is neither in leſs nor more a Ground of Hope or Confidence to us. If we value ouſelves leſs or more upon the Account of it, we do but idolize it. It is a Mean of God's Appointment to impreſs deeply upon our Spirits a Senſe of our Duty to God, a Senſe of our Inſufficiency to perform any Duty acceptably by any Ability or Power of our own, and to ſtrengthen our Dependence upon Chriſt alone for Righteouſneſs and Strength: But if we truſt to it as a Ground of Hope, we pervert the End and Deſign of its Inſtitution, and abuſe it to perverſe Ends of our own Invention.

2*dly*. We remark, that our entring into, or renewing our Covenant of Duty at this Day, is a neceſſary and ſeaſonable Duty. There were weighty Reaſons, in the Days of *Nehemiah*, for renewing their Covenant of Duties, as we may ſee in the ninth Chapter of his Book and 38 Verſe: *And, becauſe of all this, we make a ſure Covenant, and write it, and our Princes*, Levites, *and Prieſts ſeal unto*

unto it. Becauſe of all this, that is, for the weighty Reaſons mentioned in the preceeding Part of the Chapter. And if we compare our Caſe with theirs, we will find the ſame weighty Reaſons, at this Day, for renewing our Covenant with the Lord our God. They renewed their Covenant, becauſe of the Defections of theſe Times, and upon the Account of the Corruptions that were brought in among them, *Neh.* ix. 34, 35. and becauſe of the Jugdments of God they were under, and becauſe of other awful Judgments they were farther threatned with, for their Sin and Apoſtaſy, *Neh.* ix. 36, 37. and that ſuch are the Circumſtances of theſe Times, muſt be evident to all who have any ſpiritual Diſcerning. How manifold ſpiritual Judgments are we under already? And what awful temporal Judgment are we threatned with? And becauſe of all theſe we are to make a ſure Covenant.

3dly. We remark, that due Preparation is neceſſary in order to our entring into this Covenant of Duty: Slightneſs of Spirit in making of Vows, brings on Slightneſs of Spirit in performing the ſame; every ſolemn Duty calls for ſolemn Preparation, and this is a Duty as ſolemn as any, to vow to *Jacob*'s mighty God; we need then to prepare for ſuch a Work. As our Lord and Saviour commands to take heed how we hear the Word preached, ſo we muſt take heed how we vow and ſwear to the Lord. In order to our Preparation, then, there are theſe few Things neceſſary. *Firſt*, It is neceſſary, in order to our Preparation, that we have Faith in the Son of God, for without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, *Heb.* xi. 6. If you come to this Duty without Chriſt, and Faith in him, you will go away without Acceptance, for *he hath made us accepted only in the Beloved.* *2dly.*

In

In order to our Preparation, it is neceſſary that we take hold of God's Covenant of Promiſe: There can be no devoting ourſelves aright to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty, unleſs we firſt take hold of God's Covenant of Promiſe. We muſt avouch the Lord to be our God, and, in the Strength of his Grace, promiſe to walk in his Statutes, keep his Judgments and do them. You ſee this Duty of taking hold of God's Covenant of Grace pointed out in *Iſaiah* lvi. 6, 7. *Alſo the Sons of the Stranger, that join themſelves to the Lord to ſerve him, and to love the Name of the Lord to be his Servants; every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my Covenant; even them will I bring to my holy Mountain, and make them joyful in my Houſe of Prayer; their Burnt-Offerings and their Sacrifices ſhall be accepted upon mine Altar.* You are all warranted to take hold of God's Covenant, even tho' you be the Sons of the Stranger. Your Parents have taken hold of the Seal of it for you, when your were Infants, but that will be a Witneſs againſt you, if you take not hold of his Covenant yourſelves by Faith in his Word of Grace and Promiſe. But then, 3*dly*. as all Men and Women are at Agreement with Sin, ſo this Agreement muſt be diſannulled and broken before you can enter into this Covenant of Duty; for if you regard Iniquity in your Heart, the Lord will not hear your Prayers, neither will he accept your Covenants and Vows made to him. What a woful Caſe are they in, who only profeſs to worſhip the Lord, and ſtill continue in their Agreement with Sin? For what Fellowſhip hath Righteouſneſs with Unrighteouſneſs? And what Communion hath Light with Darkneſs? And what Concord hath Chriſt with *Belial?*

4*thly*. It

4*thly*. It is neceſſary, in order to our renewing Covenant with God, that we be humbled for and repent of our Breach of former Vows and Engagements. This we find was the Practice of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, *Jer*. l. 4, 5. *In thoſe Days, and at that Time, ſaith the Lord, the Children of* Iſrael *ſhall come, they and the Children of* Judah *together, going and weeping; they ſhall go and ſeek the Lord their God, they ſhall ask the Way to* Zion *with their Faces thitherward, ſaying, Come, and let us join ourſelves to the Lord in a perpetuol Covenant that ſhall not be forgotten.* They ask the Way *weeping* as they go. Goſpel-Humiliation, that ſprings from Faith's looking on him whom we have pierced, is abſolutely neceſſary in our joining to him in a Covenant of Duty: We need to have our former Breaches removed by a freſh Application unto, and Faith's Sprinkling of the Blood of *Jeſus*, that cleanſeth from all Sin; thus betaking ourſelves to the Fountain opened to the Houſe of *David*, and to the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*, for Sin and for Uncleanneſs.

5*thly*. It is neceſſary, before you enter into this Bond and Oath, that you ſit down and count the Coſt of ſuch an Undertaking as to enter into God's Covenant, *Luke* xiv. 28. *Which of you intending to build a Tower, ſitteth not down and counteth the Coſt, whether he hath ſufficient to finiſh it.* It has been ſeen of raſh Covenanters, that they have been ſo far from ſtanding to their Engagements, that every Moving of their Hand afterwards has been employed in pulling down *Zion*'s Towers and in the Building of *Babylon*. Now, in order to your counting the Coſt, 1*ſt*. Examine your own Hearts upon the Articles of this Covenant which is to be ſworn to the Lord of Hoſts. Put the Queſtion to your own Hearts, and let every one ſay thus unto himſelf, Is it indeed

the inward Exercise of my Soul, that from the Heart I desire to essay, in the Lord's Strength, to glorify God by believing his Word of Grace contained in his Covenant of Promise? And is it the Desire of my Heart, in the Faith of his Promise, to devote myself to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty? Is it my Concern and Exercise to be enabled, with an uplifted Heart, as well as uplifted Hands, to profess and declare, that through the Lord's Grace I take hold of Christ as the only Propitiation for my Sins, of his Righteousness as the only Ground of my Acceptance with God, and of his Covenant of free Promises as my only Charter for eternal Life? And is it the Desire of my Heart by Faith to avouch the Lord to be my God, to take his Word for my Rule, and his Spirit for my Guide? And after examining my Duty of vowing to the Lord from the Word, and after considering my Insufficiency to pay my Vows, and the Strength that is in Christ to enable me to perform them, am I resolved to swear to the Lord, that in his Strength I will walk in his Ways, keep his Commandments, and hearken to his Voice? And do I resolve, through Grace, to adhere unto the true reformed Doctrine, Worship, Presbyterial Government and Discipline of the House of God? And do I also resolve, that, in my Station and Capacity, I shall oppose all contrary Errors, such as Popery, Prelacy, Deism, *Arianism*, *Arminianism*, Independency, and Latitudinarian Principles? And do I resolve, in my Station, to endeavour the Reformation of *England* and *Ireland*, according to the Word of God, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government? And do I resolve to strengthen the Hands of my Brethren in this great Work and Duty, and to endeavour by Grace to have a Conversation

ſation becoming the Goſpel of Chriſt, and in my Family and Station to be a good Example to others, and to obſerve every Duty incumbent on me both to God and Man? And do I reſolve againſt all Neutrality and Indifference in this great Work, and that, denying myſelf, will prefer the Honour of God, and the Good of his Cauſe and People, to every Thing elſe, and that, forſaking the Counſels of Fleſh and Blood, I will depend on the Lord alone?

2*dly*. As you are to count the Coſt by examining your Hearts upon every Article of the Bond, ſo you are to count what it *muſt* coſt you, and what it *may* coſt you. 1. There are ſome Things it *muſt* coſt you. (1.) It muſt coſt you the renouncing of all Confidence in the Fleſh, and betaking yourſelves unto the Dependence of Faith upon Chriſt alone. (2.) It muſt coſt you the Death of all your Idols, the Mortification of all your Corruptions, the Breaking all your Leagues with Sin; a League with Sin, and a League with God, can never ſtand together; there muſt be a Warfare maintained, through Grace, with every Sin. (3.) It muſt coſt your Subordinating all your Concerns to Chriſt's Intereſt and Glory. You muſt be denied to all worldly Comforts, ſo as to be ready, in Chriſt's Strength, to part with them all at his Call. You muſt be of another Spirit than the Men of the World. Your Eye muſt be upon another World. (4.) It muſt coſt you the Denying of all your Self-Righteouſneſs and Doings, in Point of Acceſs to and Acceptance with God; it is in the Strength, and through the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt alone, that you can pay a Vow. (5.) It muſt coſt you a great deal of Pains and Labour. You ſee we undertake to endeavour the Reformation of Religion in *England* and *Ireland*, and among ourſelves; ſo that ſays that

that we must be at a great deal of Pains to know our Duty, and to follow it. You must not be indifferent about the Times, as many are, who are only taken up about themselves, and have no Concern for *Zion*. Some there are who have only a publick Religion, and know nothing of personal Religion: But as such who have only a publick Religion, have no Religion at all, so personal Religion, and a Concern for the Cause of Christ, are joined together in the Word of God; and what God has joined we are not to separate. (6.) It must cost your Maintaining an Intercourse with Christ, and a daily Traffick and Commerce with the Land that is afar off, to bring in from Time to Time, by Faith in the Word of Grace and Promise, Supplies of Grace to enable you for Work and Warfare, to do and to suffer.

2. There are some Things it *may* cost you. It may cost you the Spoiling of your Goods; and by Grace the Lord's People have taken joyfully the Spoiling of their Goods for Christ. It may cost you Bonds and Imprisonment, *Rev.* ii. 10. *Behold the Devil shall cast some of you into Prison, that you may be tried.* It may cost you your Life; and therefore you ought to be in the Disposition of the Apostle, who said, *What mean ye to weep, and to break my Heart; for I am ready, not only to be bound, but to die at* Jerusalem *for the Name of* Jesus. It may cost you so much in the Issue; but tho' it should not, you are to lay your Account with all this Cost in adhering to the Lord and his Cause; for all that are Christ's Disciples and sincere Followers, they are Martyrs in Resolution: *For except a Man deny himself, and take up his Cross and follow Christ, he cannot be his Disciple.*

HEAD II. We proceed, 2*dly*. By divine Assistance, to shew that this is a Duty in New Testament Times.

Times, and even when the witneſſing Remnant are the ſmaller Part, and but a few, when compared with the Oppoſers of Reformation-Work: And that it is a Duty, at this Day, to renew our Covenant-Engagements, will appear, if we conſider, in the *firſt* Place,

That we live in the Goſpel-Day, concerning which it was propheſied that this Duty ſhould be gone about, as in our Text, *In that Day*, (*viz.* the Goſpel-Day, or in the Times of the New-Teſtament) *ſhall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts*. The Goſpel-Day is a Day of Manifeſtation, wherein we ſee more clearly the Glory of the Lord revealed; we ſee more clearly the Covenant of Grace as it ſtands faſt with Chriſt, which is the Foundation on which all our Vows and Engagements muſt be built; we ſee the Glory of his Perſon, *Immanuel*, God with us; we ſee more clearly that everlaſting Righteouſneſs he has brought in as the Foundation of the Faith and Hope of Men; we ſee the Law fulfilled by him as a Covenant, and delivered by him to us as a Rule of Life; we ſee more clearly the ſtrong Grounds and Reaſons for this and every other moral Duty from the Authority of God, the infinite Perfection of his Nature, and from his Holineſs, Grace and Love manifeſted in the Face of Jeſus Chriſt; we ſee more clearly the Furniture that is in Chriſt, for Light and Leading, to make known the Way of Duty, and the Grace and Strength that is communicated by him to us, to enable us to walk in his Ways, to keep his Commandments, and to hearken to his Voice. Thus then it muſt be our Duty in particular, at this Day, to vow to the Lord of Hoſts.

2*dly*. Sea-

2*dly*. Seeing the Ends of this Duty, of vowing and ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts, are the ſame now as under the Old Teſtament, it muſt be our Duty at this Day, as well as it was theirs when they renewed their Covenant-Engagements in the Days of *Nehemiah*, *Joſiah*, and others. We are under as great and ſtrong Obligations to maintain the Purity of God's Worſhip, to adhere to his Truths, and to walk cloſely with him, as they were; and we are as ready to turn aſide from the Lord as they were. Our Corruptions are as ſtrong, and we are as ready to be forgetful of our Obligations to the Lord as they were? Our Graces are as weak, and we have as much Need of this Mean of God's Appointment to awaken our Attention to Duty, and to ſtrengthen our Faith and Dependence upon the Lord, as they had.

3*dly*. That it is a Duty at this Day, as well as it was the Duty of the Old Teſtament Church, to renew our Covenant-Engagements to the Lord, will appear, if we conſider, that thoſe very Things that made this Duty ſeaſonable at that Time, are to be found with us at this Day. Why? They entred into a Covenant with the Lord upon the Back of great Deliverances, upon the Back of the *Red-Sea* Deliverances, when the Lord had delivered them, and deſtroyed their Enemies. And has not the Lord many a Time delivered us in theſe Lands, and wrought great Salvation for us, from Time to Time? It was alſo in the Time of much Backſliding and Corruption, when they had mingled themſelves with the People of the Land, and came to ſee the Neceſſity of being ſeparated from them, as in the Days of *Ezra*, as we may ſee in *Ezra* ix. They had mingled with the Heathen, and learned of them their Way; and how far this is the Caſe with

with us, at this Day and Time, is obvious to every attentive Obſerver. We have been too long mingled with thoſe who have either adopted or connived at the groſs Errors vented in theſe Times; and we have been mingled with them in the Backſlidings and Defections of the Day; and therefore it is a Seaſon wherein we ought to return unto the Lord, to vow and ſwear that we ſhall walk with him in his Strength. They renewed their Covenants with the Lord, when they were under great Judgments, as in *Neh.* ix. 37. They were in great Diſtreſs; becauſe of all which they made a ſure Covenant, *Verſe* 38. Are not we alſo in great Diſtreſs by the Judgments of God already inflicted, and the awful Judgments we are threatned with, a foreign Sword being already drawn againſt the Land? Are not we in great Diſtreſs by the Diviſion and Neutrality of the Day and Time wherein we live, ſome who ſeemed to have the Root of the Matter turning indifferent about the Lord's Cauſe, and bitterly oppoſing that Work which once they appeared to be zealous for? Are not we in great Diſtreſs by our Deadneſs, Formality and ſpiritual Plagues, by the Lord's hiding his Face, and withdrawing from publick Ordinances, and from us in our Retirements, in a great Meaſure? As alſo by our great Inſenſibility in all theſe, for we are not turning to the Hand that ſmiteth us, nor are we ſeeking the Lord of Hoſts. From all which it is evident, that it is a neceſſary and a ſeaſonable Duty for us to renew our Covenant-Engagements unto the Lord.

4*thly*. It is a moral Duty, and therefore muſt be our Duty at this Day, as well as it was the Duty of the Old Teſtament Church; for moral Duties are of themſelves binding and obligatory in all Periods

riods of the Church. It is a Duty enjoined in the third Commandment of the moral Law, and we are commanded, *Pſalm* lxxvi. 11. to vow to the Lord, as well as to pay; *Vow and pay to the Lord your God.* It is a moral Duty, that was both enjoined to the People of God, and practiſed by them in the Days of *Nehemiah*, *Joſiah*, and others. It was a Duty practiſed by the Saints of God in all Ages. *Job* made a Covenant with his Eyes, and *David* did ſwear to keep God's righteous Judgments, *Pſalm* cxix. 106. *I have ſworn, and I will perform, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.* It is a Duty that God graciouſly accepted and approved of in Old Teſtament Times: And, that it might evidently appear to be a moral Duty of perpetual Obligation, there are Prophecies and Promiſes of this Duty as acceptable Worſhip to God under the Goſpel, as we may ſee by comparing our Text with the 21 *Verſe* of this *Chapter: In that Day ſhall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts.* Verſe 21. *And the Lord ſhall be known to* Egypt, *and the* Egyptians *ſhall know the Lord in that Day, and ſhall do Sacrifice and Oblation; yea, they ſhall vow a Vow unto the Lord, and perform it.* Thus it is a moral Duty, and ſo a Duty at this Day.

5thly. It is a Duty wherein God is glorified, and therefore it is our Duty, at this Day, to ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts, *Jehovah Tzebaoth.* It is a very ſolemn Piece of Worſhip. The Lord has ſworn, that to him every Knee ſhall bow, every Tongue ſhall ſwear, *Iſaiah* xlv. 23. *I have ſworn by myſelf, the Word is gone out of my Mouth in Righteouſneſs, and ſhall not return, that unto me every Knee ſhall bow, every Tongue ſhall ſwear.* He is glorified by this Part of ſolemn Worſhip, becauſe by it we profeſs

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our Faith in, and Reverence towards the infinite *Jehovah, God in Chriſt reconciling the World to himſelf.* And to ſwear by the Name of the Lord of Hoſts, is to profeſs the ſtrong Obligation we are under to cleave unto him with Purpoſe of Heart, and to profeſs our own utter Inability to keep any of our Vows and Engagements. To ſwear by his Name, is juſt to call in the Name of *Jehovah*, the Name of God as in Chriſt, to our Aſſiſtance in paying our Vows. To call in his Name, that is, all his Attributes and Perfections, his Grace, Love, and Mercy, his Power, Faithfulneſs, and Holineſs, as glorified in Chriſt, to our Aſſiſtance in this great Work, of our walking cloſely with God and obeying his Voice. It glorifies him. Why? Becauſe it is juſt the higheſt Expreſſion of the quiet and aſſured Confidence of Faith upon the Name and Attributes of God, as glorified in Chriſt, for our Aſſiſtance and Through-bearing in following him fully; and that he will ſee to the Performance of all our Vows made unto him. They ſhall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it. He will enable to a ſingle and ſincere Performance of Vows; he will make our Hearts ſound in his Statutes; he will give us the ſaving Knowledge of the Lord, and ſtrengthen us to walk cloſely with God: And it is a Duty wherein God is glorified, becauſe it is a Duty wherein Faith is conſpicuouſly manifeſted; and to act Faith upon God, is a glorifying of God; for it is ſaid of *Abraham*, he was *ſtrong in the Faith, giving Glory to God.*

6thly. That it is our Duty, tho' the ſmaller Part, and tho' a few in Number compared with the Oppoſers of Reformation-Work, is plainly laid before us in the Text: *In that Day ſhall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts.*

Five Cities, a few in Number, even in the Midſt of idolatrous *Egypt*, ſhall ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts. Five Cities were but a very few of the Cities of that great and flouriſhing Kingdom of *Egypt*. Tho' the Bulk regard not this as a Duty of the Times; tho' one Part be profaning his holy Name, another Part indifferent about his Cauſe, and another Part walking after the Luſts of their own Hearts; yet five Cities, a few, are to ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts; and it is their Duty ſo to do, even in ſuch a Time; becauſe it is a Duty in which God is glorified, and a moral Duty, as has been ſhewn, therefore the Duty of a few, who would deſire to obey the Voice of the Lord, tho' the Bulk ſhould make light of this as well as of the other Duties. We cannot be abſolved from a moral Duty; we cannot be abſolved from the Obſervation of the *Sabbath*, tho' many are guilty of profaning the *Sabbath*: So no more from this Duty of ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts, tho' the great Bulk of Men of this Generation be againſt it.

7*thly*. That it is our Duty, at this Day, to renew our Covenant-Engagements to the Lord, tho' the ſmaller Number, will appear, if we conſider that it is a Duty, not only plainly taught and laid before us in the Old Teſtament, but it is a Duty practiſed by the Church in New Teſtament Times: For not only is it propheſied by the inſpired Apoſtle *John*, in the *Revelation*, *The Kingdoms of this Earth are become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt*, which, in ſome Meaſure, has had its Accompliſhment in the Kingdoms of *Scotland*, *England* and *Ireland*, their ſurrendring themſelves to the Lord, and ſwearing Allegiance to *Zion's* King, in our Covenants, National and Solemn League. But it is likeways plainly aſſerted, that the *Macedonians* gave themſelves

themſelves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty, wherein they devoted themſelves to the Lord, and vowed to keep his Commandments, and to obey his Voice. 2 *Cor.* viii. 5. *This they did not as we hoped, but firſt gave their own ſelves to the Lord, and unto us by the Will of God.* Firſt gave their own ſelves to the Lord. It muſt be our Duty, as well as of the *Macedonians*, to give our own ſelves to the Lord. The Apoſtle is ſpeaking there, in the 4th *Verſe*, of their giving of their Subſtance for the Support of the Cauſe of Chriſt; but he gives us to know, that they kept the due Order. *They did not as we hoped*, (ſays he) *but firſt they gave their own ſelves to the Lord.* We call you in this Company to this Duty and Exerciſe, to give your own ſelves to the Lord, as the *Macedonians* did. It is a good Exerciſe for every Day, and for the Lord's Day. O, whoſe are you, and to whom do you belong? The Lord's People, who have given themſelves to the Lord, have this Inſcription written upon them, *Ye are not your own, but ye are bought with a Price.* Ye are Chriſt's. Alas, ſome of you are like the ſtraying Sheep upon the Mountains, who have not come to Chriſt the Shepherd and Overſeer of your Souls. Be it known to you, the Son of God is come to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt; and his Voice is, *Other Sheep I have which are not of this Fold, them alſo I muſt bring.* He is come to bring you to his Fold and to ſave you from your Sins; and he calleth you by Name, *My Sheep know my Voice, and they follow me; and I give to them eternal Life, and none ſhall pluck them out of my Hand. To you, O Men, I call; and my Voice is to the Sons of Men.* What was thy Work this Morning? Was it to give yourſelf to the Lord? Why, here is good Work for you, Rich and Poor, young Men and old Men, young Women

men and old Women; here is good Work for you all; he is willing to give and to take: He has given his Son to you; *For unto us a Child is born, to us a Son is given*, Isa. ix. 6. O believe God's Record, that he giveth to you his Son, and that there is Life for you in his Son. He is willing to receive you, And will not you receive a given Christ? He is given to you this Day as God your Saviour, as the Lord your Righteousness and Strength, and his Countenance is as *Lebanon*, excellent as the Cedars; his Mouth is most sweet; he is altogether lovely: His Voice is to you, *Come with me from* Lebanon, *my Spouse, with me from* Lebanon. *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the Ends of the Earth. Look from the Top of* Amana, *from the Top of* Shenir *and* Hermon, *from the Lions Dens, from the Mountains of the Leopards.* As he is a giving God in Christ, so he is willing to receive you. What is thy Language then? Take with you Words, and say to him, *Take away all Iniquity and receive us graciously.* He is willing to receive you just as you are, without any farther Delay: O give yourselves then to the Lord. Here is an Altar of Acceptance, *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*

Lastly, upon this Head, That it is a Duty, at this Day, to renew our Covenant-Engagements to the Lord, will appear, if we consider that it is a Duty wherein the special and gracious Influence of the holy Spirit is promised to enable to perfom it acceptably. *Isa.* xliv. 3, 4, 5. *I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty, and Floods upon the dry Ground, I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thine Offspring, and they shall spring up as among the Grass, as Willows by the Water-Courses. One shall say, I am the Lord's, and another shall call himself by the Name of* Jacob, *and another shall subscribe with his*

his Hand to the Lord, and ſirname himſelf by the Name of Iſrael. Here are good News. Why? Here is the Promiſe of the Spirit to enable us to ſay, We are the Lord's. We cannot ſay a better Saying; but none of *Adam*'s Houſe ever could have ſaid this, if it were not through the Influence of the holy Spirit. As the Spirit of the Lord came upon *Amazai*, when he came to *David* in the Hold, and he ſaid, *Thine are we, O* David; *and on thy Side, thou Son of* Jeſſe: So it muſt be in this Way that we muſt eſſay this great Work of vowing and ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts. Here then is Grace promiſed to enable us to the right Performance of this Duty in our Retirements, and to fit and prepare us for doing it in a publick Manner. *I will pour Water upon him that is thirſty, and Floods upon the dry Ground.* The Holy Ghoſt is compared to Water, and Floods of Water: And he has promiſed to pour him out as Floods of Water. We are dry Ground at this Day, let us then plead that he may pour his Spirit upon us; plead the Promiſe, pray over the Promiſe, believe the Promiſe, pray it over with Application to yourſelves, as to the Place, and for the Miniſter of the Place, that there may be the Sound of the Abundance of Rain, and that the Lord may be as the Dew to *Iſrael*, and revive his Work in the Midſt of the Years. So much for the ſecond Thing propoſed.

Before we proceed to the *third general Head* in the Method, namely, to ſpeak of this ſolemn Part of religious Worſhip, *vowing* and *ſwearing* to the *Lord of Hoſts*, let us conſider, that this Work and Duty, to be done in the Goſpel-Day, is not a Work to be performed in order to obtain Life. No! for the Work of Redemption is a finiſhed Work. The glo-

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rious Head, having finiſhed his Work, has entred into his Reſt, and left us nothing to do in Point of Impetration and obtaining Acceptance with God. He has left us nothing to do in the Matter of fulfilling the Law as a Covenant of Works: But yet he will do much in his People; he will work Sanctification and Holineſs in all thoſe that are truly juſtified, and make them to be fruitful in good Works; not that they may live, but becauſe they do live, being juſtified already: Not in Point of working for Life, but of doing from Life: Not to merit any Thing at the Hand of God, but to teſtify their Thankfulneſs to God: Not to ſhare of the Glory with Chriſt of our own Salvation, in leſs or in more, but that we may be conformed to him, by his Spirit dwelling in us, in Point of Sanctification; and all this our doing is to be in a Way of Union with him, and he working all our Works in us: Altho' the Lord's People are not to fulfil the Law, thereby to obtain Life, yet they are under the Law to Chriſt, yea, under the moſt ſtrict and ſolemn Ties to Goſpel-Holineſs, and to walk cloſely with God, that thereby they may evidence that they are alive from the Dead. *The Statutes of the Lord do rejoice their Heart: To them the Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightning their Eyes; his Judgments are to them righteous altogether, more to be deſired are they than Gold, yea, than much fine Gold; ſweeter alſo than Honey to the Mouth:* His whole Will is ſweeter to them than the Honey-Comb: His Law comes juſt along with his Promiſe, Hand in Hand, to his People; and all the Furniture for vowing and ſwearing to the Lord, and for the Performance of every other Duty required, comes juſt wrapped up in the Promiſe; and this makes all ſweet and refreſhing to

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his Followers; and nothing more delightful in it, than that it is all to be done in borrowed Strength and all to be done to the Glory of the Head; and Self to be ſunk down into eternal Oblivion, and a God in Chriſt alone to bear all the Glory.

Having thus given you a general Hint, that vowing to the Lord of Hoſts is to be managed in a Goſpel-Way, and not in a legal Manner, we proceed to the *third general Head* in the Method, namely, To ſpeak of this Duty, this ſolemn Part of religious Worſhip, vowing and ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts. And, in diſcourſing this Head, we would endeavour, by Grace,

Firſt, To ſpeak of the Nature of this ſolemn Part of religious Worſhip.

2*dly*. Of the Matter of this ſolemn Vow and Covenant under Conſideration.

3*dly*. Of the Manner in which this ſolemn Part of religious Worſhip is to be performed and gone about.

And, *firſt*, as to the Nature of this ſolemn Part of religious Worſhip, it is to be obſerved, in the *firſt* Place, that we are not to put our perſonal Covenanting, or National Covenants, in the Room of the Covenant of Grace: Perſonal Covenanting and national Covenanting are of the ſame Nature and Kind, and differ only, as the one is tranſacted by Perſons ſingly and ſeparately conſidered, and the other by many Perſons jointly in a Body: But many miſmanage perſonal Covenanting, and likeways national Covenanting; for too many apprehend, that God, in the Word, declares himſelf willing to be our God upon certain Terms or Conditions to be performed by us, different from believing the free Promiſe of the Goſpel with Application to ourſelves; and therefore they do accordingly make

make a Covenant with God, taking him for their God upon thoſe Terms to be by them performed in the Strength of Grace, promiſing and vowing, that, if God will be their God, pardon their Sins, and ſave their Souls, they will, for their Part, be his People, faithfully ſerve him all the Days of their Lives, watching againſt all known Sin, and performing every known Duty. There are ſome Miſtakes here we are to beware of. In the *firſt* Place, this is to confound and mingle the Covenant of Grace and our Covenant of Duty together, as if they were the ſame: The Covenant of Grace was made from Eternity between the Father and the Son: Our Covenant of Duty is to be made when we have taken hold of God's Covenant of Grace, and never till then are we ſuitably prepared for this ſolemn Work. (2.) This is to bring in ourſelves as Parties tranſacting in the Covenant of Grace. Whereas Chriſt alone, as the ſecond *Adam*, was the Party-Contracter in that Covenant upon Man's Side, as appears from the 89 *Pſalm* throughout. God never did, nor ever will tranſact with any Sinner of *Adam*'s Family. There is nothing we can perform, nothing we can implement in this Matter: And how then can we be Tranſactors in the Covenant of Grace? His Holineſs will not permit, his Juſtice will not allow, his infinite Wiſdom will not admit of a Tranſaction with any Sinner at firſt Hand. But (3.) this would be to bring in ourſelves, our Doings, or what we are helped to do by Grace, into the conditionary Part of the Covenant of Grace, and ſo to overthrow the Doctrine of free Grace, to take Chriſt's Work out of his Hand, to ſubvert the only Foundation of the Faith and Hope of periſhing Souls, and to diſparage the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt

Christ the second *Adam*, which is the only proper and real Condition of the Covenant of Grace.

2*dly*. It is to be observed, in order to our considering the Nature of this Transaction, that, by our believing the Promise of God in his Word, and our trusting in the Person of Christ, who is to be believed upon in the Gospel of the Grace of God, we are united to the Lord Jesus Christ the Covenant-Head, and thereby we are personally entred into the Covenant of Grace, so as in his Right to have a saving Interest in the Righteousness of Christ, the Condition of the Covenant performed by him; his Doing is ours, being united to him by Faith; his Righteousness is ours, for he is *Jehovah our Righteousness*; being united to him we have a Right to eternal Life, the Promise of the Covenant made to him; *that is*, eternal Life becomes ours upon the Account of his eternal Righteousness, *Rom.* v. 17. *John* x. 10. *He that hath the Son hath Life*; he hath Life in the first Fruits of it; he hath the Beginning of Life in Possession, by having the Son; he hath the sure Title and Right to eternal Life, and he shall have the full Possession of it in due Time.

3*dly*. We observe, that altho' a Consent to take Christ as our Lord, to be ruled and governed by him, and to observe and keep his Commandments, be not the Condition and Terms of the Covenant of Grace, as we have already shewn, by which Doctrine Legalists have subverted the Gospel of Christ, and turned the Covenant of Grace into a new Law, or new Form of a Covenant of Works; yet, upon the Back of our believing the Promise, and trusting on the Person of Christ, by which we are personally entred into the Covenant, there doth necessarily follow an absolute Consent to take Christ

for our Husband, Head and Lord; a Consent to take Christ as our only Priest, to be saved by his Righteousness alone; for our only Prophet, Teacher and Guide; for our alone King and Lord, resigning ourselves wholly to him in Soul and Body, to be rescued by his Power from Sin, Death, the Devil, and this present evil World; for to serve him for ever, and to be ruled by the Will of his Command as to our Duty, and to be disposed of according to the Will of his Providence as to our Lot: A Consent to renounce every known Sin; a Consent to renounce every Lust and Idol, and all other Lords beside him; a Consent to submit to whatever he sees meet to lay upon us; a Consent to take up our Cross and follow him, as he shall call us to it; and all by his Grace, and in his Strength alone, without which we can do nothing. What is here represented contains the Substance of a Covenant of Duty, which all of us are bound to in our baptismal Vows, but which we cannot rightly engage unto, until first in Order we take hold of God's Covenant of Promise, by Faith in the Son of God, with whom the Covenant of Grace is made, and doth stand fast: And this Covenant of Duty, as it is branched out in the particular Duties that belong to it, is either a personal Covenant of one Person, or a national Covenant of many Persons in one Nation joined together.

4thly. As to the Nature of this Duty, we observe, that our devoting ourselves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty, is not a Thing indifferent, left to us to do it, or not do it at our Pleasure: But it is a solemn Part of religious Worship enjoined to us both in the first and third Commandment of the moral Law; and therefore we are not left at our own Liberty, whether we will do it or not. It is true, the far greater Part are in noways fit for joining in this

this ſolemn Part of religious Worſhip, becauſe they have not taken hold of God's Covenant of Grace; this would be to invert the Order of Matters, and to build without a Foundation. None are to be impoſed upon in this Matter, yea, none are to be admitted to join in this ſolemn Duty, but ſuch Perſons as are free of publick Scandal, and abſtain from the ordinary Outbreakings that are too cuſtomary in the Day and Time wherein we live; and the Perſons to be admitted to this ſolemn Part of religious Worſhip, are ſuch as have a Converſation becoming the Goſpel of Chriſt, and keep up the Worſhip of God in their Families Morning and Evening. There are many who obſerve it in the Evening, but neglect in the Morning: But it is good to ſhew forth his Loving-kindneſs every Morning in this Duty of Family-Worſhip, as well as by ſecret Worſhip: We have Family Mercies every Morning to praiſe him for, Family Wants and Needs every Morning that need to be ſupplied; we need Family Bleſſings, as well as perſonal Bleſſings, every Morning; and we are to begin the Day, as well as end the Day, with God, and to walk with him all the Day long. We are all engaged to this in our Baptiſm. Did we not, in our Baptiſm, engage to obey his Commandments, and this amongſt the reſt? It is dangerous to break Vows. But, to return to the Purpoſe in Hand, we ſay, this Duty of ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts is not a Thing indifferent, left to us to do, or not, at our Pleaſure: But it is a Part of ſolemn religious Worſhip, commanded both in the firſt and third Commandments of the moral Law: And that it is a Part of ſolemn religious Worſhip will appear, if we conſider, 1*ſt*. that *Jehovah*, the infinite Being, the Object of all divine Worſhip and Adoration, is the Party to whom the Vow is made; he is the

Party

Party to whom our baptiſmal Vows were made, to whom our national Vows were made, and to whom our ſacramental Vows are made; he is the Party to whom this Vow is to be explicitely made. For it is ſaid to be a Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts, *Jehovah Tzebaoth*, the Lord of the Armies, as in the firſt Language. He is the Party with whom we are to be concerned in this ſolemn Part of religious Worſhip: How ſolemn muſt it be, then, if we conſider the Object of it? It is *Jehovah*, who is Being itſelf, and the Fountain of all Being: The eternal God, the Ancient of Days, the immutable, unchangeable God, *with whom there is no Variableneſs neither Shadow of turning*. He is the omnipotent *Jehovah*, *in whom we live, move, and have our Being*. *Jehovah Tzebaoth*, *the Lord of Hoſts*. Why? He has all the Hoſts of Heaven at his Command. All the Armies of Heaven and Earth are under his Controul. *He doth according to his Will in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of this Earth*. He is *Jehovah* to whom we ſwear, or who is the Party concerned in our vowing and ſwearing: *Jehovah* the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, one in Eſſence, but three diſtinct Perſons. O! he is *Jehovah*, a God in Chriſt reconciling the World to himſelf; he is the God of Salvation, he is *Jehovah* who made a Covenant with his Choſen, with *Jehovah* his eternal Son, as the contracting Party on Man's Side of the Covenant; he is *Jehovah* the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth, forgiving Iniquity and Sin; he is *Jehovah* that paſſeth by the Tranſgreſſions of the Remnant of his Heritage, becauſe he delighteth in Mercy; he is *Jehovah* that ſanctifieth us; *I* Jehovah, *that ſanctifieth you, am holy*; he is *Jehovah* our

Healer,

Healer, his Name is *Jehovah Rophe*, the Lord that healeth us; he is *Jehovah* our God and Redeemer, and therefore we are bound to keep all his Commandments. O! he is *Jehovah* our God, who is the Party to whom the Vow is made; *Vow to the Lord your God, and pay: Let all that be round about him bring Presents to him that ought to be feared*, Psalm lxxvi. at the Close. He is the Lord our God, our God in Christ's Right and Title. *I ascend to my Father, and your Father; to my God and your God*, saith our Lord to his Disciples. Thus *Jehovah* is the Party to whom the Vow is made. But then, 2*dly*. it is a very solemn Part of religious Worship, our vowing to the Lord, if we consider, that not only is *Jehovah* the Party into whose Presence we come in this Act of religious Worship, but it is a Vow and a Promise to *Jehovah*; it is a promissory Vow to the Lord, and with God we have to do, in this Part of solemn Worship, in a very immediate Manner. In praying we seek the the Lord, in praising we extol and magnify the Lord; but in vowing we swear to the Lord; we promise that, in the Strength of his Grace, we will obey his Commandments, and hearken to his Voice. O, then, how solemn must it be! For here we bind our Souls to him in a promissory Vow. *Jehovah* is every where present, and so he is Witness to our Promise; he is the all-seeing God, and so knows our very Thoughts afar off; he knows if there be such an Heart in us, as to walk in his Ways, and hearken to his Voice; and certainly such a Disposition is not in us, unless he give it himself; and we ought to beware of deferring to pay our promissory Vow to him, for better not to vow, than to vow and not to pay; a Breach of Promise to him must be a great Iniquity. If you

break

break your Promise to your Neighbour, it is a great Fault; but if you break your Promise of Fealty to your King, that is a capital Crime. Must not therefore the Breach of our Promise to God be an Evil of the worst Nature? As it is a Promise, so it is a Promise in his Strength; if it be not a Promising and Vowing in his Strength, it is not right and acceptable Worship; and it is a Profession, *first*, That you have no Heart, no Strength or Ability of your own to make or keep the Promise. 2*dly*. There must be in this promissory Vow, a Believing that there is Strength in the new Covenant-Head to enable you to perform your Promise and Vow; it is a Believing that there is all Fulness in him for you, *Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I Righteousness and Strength*, Isa. xlv. 24. 3*dly*. This vowing and promising to the Lord includes in it the Exercise of Faith, in making a particular Application, to our own Souls, of that Grace and Strength of Christ contained in his Word of Promise, believing that his Grace and Strength shall be forthcoming to us, as in making, so in paying our Promise and Vow; as in the 21 *Verse* of this *Chapter*, *They shall vow a Vow unto the Lord, and perform it.* Thus it is an actual Betaking of ourselves to that Strength that is in him, believing he will be forthcoming to us in this Work and Duty; so that his Hand, we see, is just at every Work that his People are engaged in; and therefore we are not to go about it in a legal Way and Manner, trusting in less or more to any Thing that we can do; but we are to trust himself with the Whole of it, and then the Duty will be managed to his Praise and our own Comfort.

But to proceed, in the *third* Place, there is a great Solemnity in this Act of religious Worship, if we consider, that it is not only a Promise and a

Vow

Vow to the Lord, but it is a Vow and Promise accompanied with the Solemnity of an Oath, for it is a *Swearing to the Lord of Hosts:* Sometimes there are Covenants and Leagues entred into without expres's Oaths; but when Oaths are added the Matter is more solemn. This then must be a very solemn Piece of Worship, when the Name of *Jehovah* is invocated in the Matter. *They shall swear to the Lord of Hosts.* There are two or three Things we may notice here for clearing this Point. In the *first* Place, there is a Swearing to the Covenant of *Jehovah*, to the Covenant made between *Jehovah* the Father, and *Jehovah* the Son, and *Jehovah* the Holy Ghost, from all Eternity: For in this Vow there is a Swearing, that all our Strength and Furniture for Work and Warfare is wholly and only in this new Covenant-Head, and in this new Covenant itself, as it stands fast with Christ God's Chosen; it being, in the evangelick Nature of this Vow, a Swearing in the Strength of that Grace that is held out to us in the Covenant of Promise. Thus it is a Swearing to God's Covenant of Promise, and that he has made this Covenant with his Chosen, and that Christ his Chosen is the Head of this Covenant; that he is the Nail fastned in the sure Place, that bears all the Vessels of his Father's House, of greater and smaller Quantity; that all our Springs are in him; that all the Grace and Furniture for Work and Duty, that are bestowed upon the Church of the First-born, it all comes from him, and is communicated by him. This may be one Reason, among others, why he will have us swear to him in a Covenant of Duty, because the Covenant of Grace is a sworn Covenant. The first Covenant, made with the first *Adam*, was not a sworn Covenant; but when God introduces a new Covenant, made with his eternal Son, the second *Adam*, that Covenant is a sworn Covenant;

Covenant; as in *Pſalm* lxxxix. 3. *I have made a Covenant with my Choſen, I have ſworn unto* David *my Servant.* Verſe 35. *Once have I ſworn by my Holineſs, that I will not lie unto* David. And as it was ſworn to Chriſt the Head of the Church, ſo it was ſworn to the Church which is his Seed. Thus it was ſworn to *Abraham;* for when God could ſwear by no Greater, he ſwore by himſelf, ſaying, *Surely, bleſſing I will bleſs thee,* &c. Bleſſing I will bleſs thee, through my Son the new Covenant-Head, to whom I have ſworn by my Holineſs. This Covenant was alſo ſworn by the Son, the Head and Surety of it, *Pſalm* cxxxii. 1. *Lord remember* David *and all his Afflictions;* Verſe 2. *How he ſware unto the Lord, and vowed unto the mighty God of* Jacob. What was the Nature of the Oath? *Surely I will not come into the Tabernacle of my Houſe, nor go up into my Bed; I will not give Sleep to mine Eyes, nor Slumber to mine Eye-Lids, until I find out a Place for the Lord, an Habitation for the mighty God of* Jacob. This was literally fulfilled in *David*, but it is evident a greater than *David* is here. *David* was the Type, Jeſus Chriſt the Antitype; that it is he who is here ſpoken of, you may ſee by reading through the *Pſalm.* In *Verſe* 13. it is ſaid, *The Lord hath choſen* Zion, *and deſired it for his Reſt for ever.* Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Antitype of *David*, left his Father's Boſom, and came to this Earth in his Incarnation, and took no Reſt, had no Place where to lay his Head, and gave not over the Work, till he had prepared a Reſt for *Jacob*'s mighty God; and, having finiſhed the Work, God ſaid of *Zion, This is my Reſt for ever; here I will dwell, for I have deſired it;* for Chriſt is God's everlaſting Reſt. Here then we have the great Antitype of *David* ſwearing this Covenant of

Grace.

Grace. He ſware and vowed to the mighty God of *Jacob ;* and tho' the Church of the Firſt-born are not Parties in the Covenant of Grace, yet the Lord, by his Grace, makes them all take hold of the Covenant, founded upon Chriſt's fulfilling the Condition of it, as a publick Head and Surety. And what is our Swearing to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty ? It is juſt our ſwearing our *Amen* to that Covenant that ſtands faſt with Chriſt the true *David. They ſhall ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts.* But then, as there is here a Swearing to the Covenant of *Jehovah*, ſo,

(2.) There is, in this Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts, a ſolemn Profeſſion, yea, a ſolemn Swearing, that we are ſhipwreckt Men in the firſt Covenant ; that we have neither Houſe nor Hold in the firſt *Adam ;* that we are poor, wretched, miſerable, blind and naked ; and, particularly, that as we have nothing but Sin and Plagues, ſo likeways that we are full of Enmity to all that is good, and conſequently have no Strength to vow, or pay our Vows to the Lord.

(3.) There is, in this Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts, a Swearing that there is a Fulneſs of Righteouſneſs and Strength in the new Covenant-Head, to anſwer all our Wants and Needs, to ſuit all our Neceſſities, to ſuit every ſad Caſe we are or can be in ; that there is Strength in him, Furniture in him, Through-bearing in him, and all this in him to be communicated to us, to enable us both in the Duty of vowing and paying our Vows to the Lord of Hoſts.

(4.) In this Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts, there is a ſolemn Swearing to ſome particular Clauſes and Articles ; and, in the *firſt* Place, there is a ſolemn Swearing to an Article of *Acceptation ;* that we ac-

oept of the Lord Jesus Christ, as our Head, our Husband, our Lord, and as God our Saviour, and that, in the Strength of this new Covenant-Grace, we thus accept of him as our All. O Sirs, have you any Objection against doing this in his Strength? But we tell you before you do this, you must first believe in him, be married with him; you must first be joined to the Lord as one Spirit with him, before you be in Case, in a Way of Faith's Dependence upon that Grace that is in him, to join in this Duty of Swearing to him in a Covenant of Duty; I say, there is here a Swearing to an Article of Acceptation, that we accept of him as *Jehovah* our Righteousness, and as *Jehovah* our Strength; as the Captain of our Salvation, as our Prophet, Priest and King; as our Husband, Head, and Lord; that we accept of him as our Sin-subduing Lord, to subdue us to himself, to subdue our Unbelief, our Heart-Enmity, and all our Lusts and Corruptions; to subdue us more and more to himself; and as our Lord to rule over us, and to subdue his Enemies in us, and give us the Victory over them all, making us more than Conquerors through him that loved us. We swear to an Acceptation of him as our Leader and Guide through all our dark Steps while here, and who will afterward bring us to Glory. (2.) We swear not only to an Article of Acceptation, but also to an Article of Dedication; the Article of Dedication, as we shewed, is expressed by our Saying that we are the Lord's, *Isa.* xliv. 5. *One shall say, I am the Lord's.* That is a good Saying, but we cannot say it but under the Influence of the holy Spirit. Well, this is in the Promise, Verse 3. *I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty. One shall say, I am the Lord's*; that is to say, they shall say it one by one, every one for himself. You who are

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an Husband, you cannot say it for your Wife; Parents cannot say it for their Children; every one must say it for himself. And it is, *first*, a personal Saying, a personal Dedication, *One shall say, I am the Lord's.* 2*dly*. As it is a personal Saying, so you see it must be a Saying it under the Influence of the Spirit of Promise; *I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty*——*One shall say, I am the Lord's.* His Spirit is promised, and therefore we are to look for his Coming, that we may be enabled to mint at lisping out this Saying in his Strength. 3*dly*. This Saying, *I am the Lord's*, it is just a Saying it in the Name of Christ, *I am the Lord's*, to be accepted in the Beloved; to be an Offering on the Gospel-Altar, the Altar of much Incense; the Altar that sanctifieth the Gift. It is a Saying this by the Spirit of Christ, and in the Name of Christ; therefore it is said, *Your Burnt-Offerings shall be accepted on mine Altar*, Isa. lvi. 7. 4*thly*. This is a well-warranted Saying: So well-warranted, that every one in this worshipping Assembly is warranted to speak it out for himself, in the Name of Christ: *One shall say, I am the Lord's.* Are you not well-warranted to speak out this Saying, when it is put in a Promise? *One shall say, I am the Lord's.* O will you doubt of your Warrant? Have you not the best of Warrants to say what is contained in the Word of Promise? There is nothing put in a Promise, but what is for the Glory of God; and it is in the Word of Promise, *One shall say, I am the Lord's;* therefore it is for his Glory, that you Man, you Woman, you Lad, and you Lass, say this Night, *I am the Lord's;* that is, I am devoted to the Lord, and accepted of God through Christ and his everlasting Righteousness: There is a full Ground for you all to say this, when it is in the Word of Promise;

miſe; and there is full Ground for your Acceptance in your Mints to ſay it. The Ground is the ſame for every one here, to ſay, *I am the Lord's;* I am the Lord's, to be received and accepted to his Favour, and to be devoted to him, juſt as perfumed with the Incenſe of Chriſt, the Angel of the Covenant, who ſtands at the golden Altar, and who hath made us accepted in the Beloved. Will you doubt of Acceptance then? He was never refuſed Acceptance to any that came to God in his Name: *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all Things into his Hand.* O! then, there is wide and broad Room for your Acceptance through the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Many have come and are accepted in him, and yet there is Room for you: *Your Burnt-Offering ſhall be accepted on mine Altar.* Let not the Son of the Stranger ſay, I am a dry Tree, I am not called; tho' others be called to ſay, *I am the Lord's*, he will not accept of me. Why? Say not ſo, O Sinner, you are warranted to ſay it for thyſelf in Chriſt's Right, *I am the Lord's.*

But then, as there is, in the Article of Dedication, a Saying I am the Lord's, ſo (2.) there is in it a ſubſcribing with the Hand to the Lord, *Another ſhall ſubſcribe with his Hand unto the Lord*; and that ſays, in the *firſt Place*, That it is a diſtinct Tranſaction; it ſays, 2*dly*. That it is not to be recalled again; it is a putting our Hand to it, ſaying with the Church, in the 80th *Pſalm* at the Cloſe, *Let thy Hand be upon the Man of thy Right-Hand; ſo will not we go back from thee.* But then, 3*dly*. as there is, in the Article of Dedication, a Saying, I am the Lord's, a Subſcribing with rhe Hand to the Lord; ſo there is a Sirnaming by the Name of *Iſrael*, as in the Cloſe of the 5th *Verſe* of that 44th of *Iſaiah.* Now this Sirnaming by the Name of *Iſra-*

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el implies, in the 1*ſt* Place, ſome ſupernatural Revelation of Chriſt, as God's Servant in whom he will be glorified; juſt a View of him as the new Covenant-Head, that hath finiſhed the Work that was given him to do; and as the Juſtice-ſatisfying Head through whom God is acceſſible by ſinful Men, he having fulfilled all Righteouſneſs; juſt a View of him as that infinite Perſon, through whom all our Worſhip is or can be accepted, and in whom only God has Glory and Honour, and as the Head of the worſhipping Aſſembly both of the upper and lower Houſe; a View of him as the great Worker of every Work that is for the Glory and Honour of God; every Work that is done through the Land, and in our Hearts, to the Glory of God, his Hand is at it; and as he works the Work, ſo he muſt bear the Glory.

2*dly*. *Shall ſirname himſelf by the Name of* Iſrael. Why? It implies that you have given up with your own Name, and all your Self-Righteouſneſs and Self-Confidence; and that you have given up your Name to be ſwallowed up in the Name of Chriſt, who is God's *Iſrael*, in whom he is glorified. O! You will not only be called by his Name, but you will eat his Bread, and wear his Apparel; you will have all from him, and you will have your Name out of Sight, and his only to be known and remembred. *Sirname himſelf by the Name of* Iſrael; juſt as thoſe who are adopted Children, they belong to a new Houſe and Family, and have a new Name; they loſe all their Name in the Conſideration they ſtood in before; ſo doth the Soul in this Article of Dedication, they ſirname themſelves by the Name of *Iſrael*.

3*dly* *Shall ſirname himſelf by the Name of* Iſrael. It implies the Expectation of Faith to live upon *Iſ-*

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rael their Head; they have got a new Name, and are admitted to new Privileges, to live on Chriſt by Faith, that they may live to his Praiſe.

4*thly*. This Article of Dedication is expreſſed by a Giving ourſelves to the Lord, 2 *Cor*. viii. 4, 5. *Paul* ſaith of the *Macedonians*, *They firſt gave their own ſelves to the Lord, and then unto us by the Will of God.* It is a Giving our Underſtandings to the Lord, and that in order to be taught by the Lord: For our Lord ſaith, *John* vi. 45. *It is written in the Prophets, and they ſhall be all tanght of God.* And, ſeeing the Promiſe is univerſal, every one of us is warranted to give up ourſelves to the Lord, this very Moment, to be taught of God; and by his Teaching the Heart of the raſh ſhall underſtand Knowledge: Seeing God is the Teacher, and has taken teaching Work in Hand, the moſt ignorant Sinner, the dulleſt Scholar in all this Aſſembly, may take Encouragement from it; and every one of us may reſign and give up ourſelves to the Lord, to be taught of God; to ſee the Wonders of his Law, and to know the Myſteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, which are hid from the Wiſe and Prudent, and revealed unto Babes. He hath ſaid, *I will give them an Heart to know me, that I am the Lord*; *I will betrothe thee unto me in loving Kindneſs, and thou ſhalt know the Lord.* But then we are to give our Wills to the Lord, to chuſe him for our God and Portion in Chriſt's Right; of whom it is ſaid, as the new Covenant-Head, *He ſhall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation*, Pſalm lxxxix. 26. This is the Shout and Cry of the elder Brother, and all the younger Brethren may lift up their Voice, and ſing, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation. In the Right of his eternal Son

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we may and ought to chuſe God for our God, his Word for our Rule, his Spirit for our Guide, his Glory for our laſt and higheſt End. But then we are to give our Conſciences to the Lord, to receive his Orders, and to be a faithful Deputy for him in our Soul; our Affections to him, to fear him with a holy filial and reverential Fear, to love him with a ſuperlative Love, and to delight in him above all Things. We are to give our whole Soul to him in all its Powers and Faculties, and to preſent our Bodies to him in all its Members. We are to give our Ears to him, to hear his Goſpel; our Eyes to him, to read his Word and behold his Works; our Feet, to run his Errands; our Lips and Tongues, to praiſe him, to pray to him, and to commend him to others. We are to give our whole Man unto the Lord, as a living Sacrifice acceptable to God through Jeſus Chriſt, which is our reaſonable Service.

5thly. This Article of Dedication is likeways expreſſed in Scripture by a joining ourſelves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten, *Jer.* l. 5. This Exerciſe, of joining ourſelves to the Lord, may either be taken for the uniting Act of Faith, according to another Reading of the Words, *Come, and let us join ourſelves to the Lord, the perpetual Covenant ſhall not be forgotten.* Let us join ourſelves to *Jehovah*, by believing the Promiſe, and truſting in the Perſon of Chriſt the new Covenant-Head, for the everlaſting Covenant made with Chriſt ſhall not be forgotten of God, and we may build our Hope for Eternity upon the Promiſe of God, and his Covenant that ſtands faſt with Chriſt. God will be ever mindful of his Covenant; it is the Chief of his Ways. Or, as it ſeems to be more agreeable to the Scope of the Place,

Come,

Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord by a Covenant of Duty never to be forgotten, but to be remembred, by us, as a sacred Bond of our Depending upon the Grace of Christ and his Strength; cleaving to him with Purpose of Heart, and daily paying the Vows we have come under to the Lord. This is a Joining ourselves to the Train and Retinue of the Lamb, that stands upon the Mount *Zion*, and with him an hundred and forty and four Thousand, having his Father's Name written in their Foreheads, *Rev.* xiv. 1. It is a Joining ourselves to the Witnesses of Christ, and to the Witnesses of *Scotland*'s, *England*'s, and *Ireland*'s covenanted Reformation: A Joining ourselves to the Disciples of Christ, to the Confessors and Martyrs of Jesus, by believing and adhering to the same Cause of Christ which they witnessed for, and for which they took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods; by professing the same Faith, Doctrine, Discipline, Worship and Government which the Martyrs of Jesus both contended and suffered for in this Land: A Joining ourselves to Christ, as our Sin-subduing Lord, and the Captain of our Salvation: A Joining ourselves to those Armies that are in Heaven riding on white Horses, who follow him whose Name is faithful and true, and who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. It is a Joining ourselves to *Jehovah*, to serve him, to love the Name of *Jehovah*, and to be his Servants, *Isa.* lvi. 6. O how blessed an Exercise is this under the Influence of the Spirit of Promise? To serve him in such a Bond of Service, Duty, and Love; to serve him is the choicest Liberty, and to love him is to breathe in the Air of Heaven; for as Love will be perfected in the Church triumphant, so in that Place his servants shall see his Face; and Love

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to him, and the praiſing of him will there for ever be the Exerciſe of the general Aſſembly of the Church of the Firſt-born that are written in Heaven. It is only under the Influence of the Spirit of Promiſe that we can mint at this Duty, that we can join ourſelves to the Lord in a Covenant never to be forgotten. It will never be forgotten by God, and it muſt not be forgotten by us; and to encourage our Faith, and excite our Dependence on Chriſt, let us look to him, let us walk up and down in his Name, making Mention of his Righteouſneſs, even of his only. So much for a Hint of this Article of Dedication, to which we ſwear in our vowing and ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts.

3dly. In this Vow and Covenant we ſwear, not only to an Article of Acceptation, to an Article of Dedication, but alſo we ſwear to an Article of Renunciation. We muſt all acknowledge to our God, that other Lords beſide him have had the Dominion over us, but reſolve that now, by his Grace, we will make only Mention of his Name, *Iſa*. xxvi. 3. It is to be our Work to rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, and to renounce all Confidence in the Fleſh, to deny ourſelves, renouncing our Self-Righteouſneſs, Self-Seeking, and Self-Confidence; we muſt renounce all our ſpiritual Enemies, ſuch as the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh; the Luſt of the Eye, the Luſt of the Fleſh, and the Pride of Life, and, in the Name and Strength of the Captain of Salvation, we are to maintain a Warfare againſt Principalities and Powers, and the Rulers of the Darkneſs of this World; we muſt lay aſide every Weight, and the Sin that doth moſt eaſily beſet us, and reſolve, in the Strength of Grace, to be upright before the Lord, and to keep ourſelves from our own Iniquity. As this Work is great, ſo there is Furniture and

Proviſion in the new Covenant, to enable us to renounce all the Enemies of Chriſt, and to take the Field againſt all the Legions of Hell in us or around us, *Hoſea* xiv. 4, 5, 8. Verſes compared; *I will heal their Backſliding, I will love them freely; for mine Anger is turned away from him. I will be as the Dew to* Iſrael——— Ephraim *ſhall ſay, What have I any more to do with Idols?* Under the Influences of the holy Spirit, wherein Chriſt is as the Dew to *Iſrael*; we may ſay, and ſhall ſay it, What have I any more to do with Idols? He will be to *Iſrael* as the Dew that lies all Night on their Branches; he will be as the Dew in his enlightening Grace, his Heart-drawing Grace, his Heart-melting and Heart-thawing Grace, coming down upon their Branches. Then ſhall *Iſrael* ſay, What have I any more to do with Idols? I have had too much to do with Idols, too long to do with Idols: But ſeeing *Jehovah* will heal my Backſlidings, and love me freely, What then have I any more to do with Idols? Then ſhall *Ephraim* ſay, in the Strength of his Grace, who is as the Dew to *Iſrael*, I will have no more to do with Idols, I will have no Confidence in myſelf for Righteouſneſs and Strength, but I will lift up mine Eyes to the Hills, from whence cometh mine Aid. He is as the green Fir-Tree, from whom my Fruit and Fruitfulneſs is found; and therefore, under the Influence of his Grace, *Ephraim* is made to ſay, I will have no more to do with Idols, but, through Grace, fix all my Confidence, Faith and Hope upon the God of *Iſrael*, bleſs myſelf in him, and glory in his holy Name. *Surely ſhall* Iſrael *ſay, In* Jehovah *have I Righteouſneſs and Strength.* What have I to do to idolize any Thing in the Place of Chriſt? What have I to do to draw Comfort from the Creature? What have I to do to idolize the World,

World, that is but transitory and very Vanity? What have I any more to do with Self-Sufficiency for Work or Warfare, but to trust in *Jehovah*'s All-Sufficiency for whatever he calls unto? Ephraim *shall say, What have I any more to do with Idols?* I have no more to do with the Pleasures of Sin for a Season; no more to do with the Prince of the Power of the Air, but to declare War against Sin and the Kingdom of Darkness. What have I to do to have any Confidence in any other but in the Lord *Jehovah* alone, the God of *Israel*, to put my Confidence under the Wings of the God of *Israel*, under which I am now come to live, I am now come to die, and am now come to spend an Eternity? O, through grace, I am now made to say, I will trust under the Wings of the God of *Israel*, in him will I bless myself, and in him will I glory.

But we return to shew, that our Vowing and Swearing to the Lord of Hosts is a solemn Part of religious Worship; and it will appear, if we consider, that it is not only a Swearing to the Lord, but, *4thly.* it is a Swearing by the Lord, a Swearing by the great Name of the Lord our God, as you have it in *Jer.* iv. 2. *And thou shalt swear the Lord liveth in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righteousness; the Nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory.* Deut. vi. 13. & x. 20. *Thou shalt fear the Lord thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his Name.* It is then a Swearing the Lord liveth, a Swearing by the living and true God, in Opposition to all Idols and false Gods; it is a Swearing by the Name of the Lord our God: And thus it is a most solemn Declaration of our Faith of his Being and Existence, and a solemn Appeal to his Omniscience as to the Sincerity of our Resolutions and Purposes, so far as

as we can know our own treacherous Hearts; and a Calling upon his Holineſs and Juſtice to avenge perfidious and treacherous Dealing in his Covenant. The Connection is remarkable; *Thou ſhalt ſwear the Lord liveth, and the Nations ſhall bleſs themſelves in him; that is*, when Strangers to Chriſt are Witneſſes to the Solemnity, and to the appearing Seriouſneſs in which you ſwear by the Lord, and obſerve how circumſpectly you walk in an Agreeableneſs to the Impreſſions you profeſs to have on your Spirits, of the infinite Majeſty, Holineſs, and Grace of God, it will provoke and encourage them to ask the Way to *Zion*, to uſe the Means of Acquaintance with Chriſt; and, having met with him in his Word of Grace, the Nations will bleſs themſelves in him; and place all their Happineſs in his Favour, and glory in his Righteouſneſs alone? They will bleſs the Lord they ever heard of Chriſt, and of the Way of Salvation through him; they will place all their Confidence in him; they will glory in him, in what he has done, in what he is doing, in what he has promiſed to do, and really will do for the Ends of his Glory, and for their Good, in Time and to Eternity. So much for a Hint at the firſt Thing propoſed on this Head, which was to ſpeak a little of the Nature of our Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts.

We ſhould now proceed to the *ſecond* Thing upon this Head, namely, to conſider the Matter of this Bond and Oath before us; but, before we enter on this, we ſhall firſt lay down two or three Remarks for our Inſtruction. And, in the *1ſt* Place,

We remark, that a perſonal Covenant, and this ſolemn Oath and Covenant that we are to enter into jointly and together, are of one and the ſame Kind and Nature; only whereas, in a perſonal Co-

venant,

venant, there is but one Perſon that vows and ſwears to the Lord, but in this there are many Perſons joining together about the ſame Part of religious Worſhip. The Parties, joining in this Vow and Oath, are juſt all in this Land, or the neighbouring Lands, who have been helped by Grace to take hold of God's Covenant of Promiſe, and in his Strength are reſolved to cleave to the Whole of his Truths, even to ſuch Truths as are reckoned by ſome to be of ſmall Conſequence; all ſuch as buy the Truth at any Rate, and reſolve to ſell it at no Rate; and ſuch as will not give up with the Order and Government of Chriſt's Houſe, and are willing to bind themſelves to theſe Duties by the Oath of God. A perſonal Covenant, then, is between the Lord and one ſingle Perſon, tranſacted in a moſt ſecret Manner; but here there may be many, and it is to be lamented that ſo few are diſpoſed for this Work at this Day. It is to be wiſhed, that ſuch as deſire to own the Cauſe of Chriſt may offer themſelves willingly to this Work. As two are better than one, ſo, the more of the Owners of Chriſt's Cauſe that ſhall be directed to join in this ſolemn Work, it will make the more publick the Confeſſion of his Name; and may be a Mean of ſtrengthning one another's Hands, in witneſſing for his Truth and Cauſe at this Day, when ſo many care for none of theſe Things.

2*dly*. We remark, that as perſonal Covenanting and national Covenanting are much of the ſame Nature and Kind, only different in ſome Circumſtances, the one being done in ſecret, the other in publick; ſo we remark, that Covenanting, in its Nature, and in the Nature of Things, goes in a due Order before communicating and ſitting down at the Table of the Lord; perſonal Covenanting muſt go along with

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our Vowing at his Table. We are to examine ourſelves and ſo to eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup: And as Examination is neceſſary, ſo our renewing our Engagements to be the Lord's ought likeways to preceed the other, becauſe, in ſitting down at the Lord's Table, we take the Seal of his Covenant; and, if we be not in Covenant with him, our Joining in the ſolemn Ordinance of his Supper is nothing more than ſealing of a Blank. Thus, I ſay, there is at leaſt a Neceſſity for perſonal Covenanting preceeding Communicating, and now Providence has opened a Door for renewing our ſolemn national Vows, for our Saying, *Come, and let us join ourſelves to the Lord in a perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten:* Come, and let us cleave to him, and avouch him as our God before the World; let us confeſs his Name before the World in a Day when it is ſo openly denied; let us go up to the Houſe of the God of *Jacob*, and there he will teach us of his Ways. It may be very deſirable, if the Lord prepare the Hearts of his People to himſelf, and take away the Iniquity that ſtands between him and us, that our publick Vowing go along with our publick Communicating.

3dly. We remark, that, as to our Entring into this Bond of the Covenant, there are many Difficulties in our Way, and becauſe of all theſe we have Need to ſeek to the Lord in the Actings of Faith, in the Duty of Faſting and Humiliation, that he may teach us a right Way. We are in Danger of raſh approaching on the one Hand, and we are in Danger of Slackneſs and Remiſneſs, and of neglecting preſent Duty, on the other: By our Slackneſs we may come to loſe the Seaſon of this Duty; every Thing is beautiful in its Seaſon, and certainly this Duty muſt alſo be beautiful in its own Seaſon:

Seaſon : We are in Danger of being involved in Difficulties, and therefore we need to look to the Lord, to ſhew us his Way, as we find *Ezra* did at the River *Ahava*, as we may ſee in the 8th Chapter of his Book, and 21ſt Verſe. At that Time there were few of the Sons of *Levi*, who ought to have been moſt foreward in this Work of going up to *Jeruſalem* to repair the Houſe of the Lord, and therefore he ſent for Miniſters, as in the 17th Verſe. How much is this the Caſe with us? At this Day there are few of the Sons of *Levi*, few Miniſters to own this ſolemn Work of renewing our Covenants with the Lord: But, alas! ſome of them, who once appeared zealous for his Cauſe, are now opening their Mouths in the moſt reviling Way and Manner againſt the ſame; and endeavour to palliate the Defections of the Day, to hide their own Shame, in not coming out to the Help of the Lord againſt the Mighty. You ſee then what Courſe *Ezra* took in the 21ſt Verſe; *Then I proclaimed a Faſt there, at the River* Ahava, *that we might afflict ourſelves before our God, to ſeek of him a right Way for us, and for our little Ones, and for all our Subſtance.* We are then to mint, in his Strength, to faſt before the Lord our God, and to inquire of him a right Way for ourſelves at this Day. You ſee *Ezra* was aſhamed to require of the King a Band of Soldiers and Horſemen to help him againſt the Enemy in the Way, becauſe they had ſaid to the King, *The Hand of our God is upon all them for Good that ſeek him; but his Power and his Wrath is againſt all them that forſake him.* Verſe 22. *So we faſted and beſought our God for this, and he was intreated of us.* We are then to take the Courſe that *Ezra* was directed to take, which was better to him, and may be ſo, by God's Bleſſing, to us, than tho' he

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or we had many Bands of Soldiers. What then is the End and Design of the Fast? Why, it is to inquire of the Lord a right Way for ourselves in a Day of so many Difficulties. In the *first* Place, It is to see that our Help or Sufficiency is noway in ourselves, for this great and solemn Work which we have in View; our Help to prepare for it is not in ourselves, no more than *Ezra*'s, who knew not how to be carried through so many Enemies and Obstructions in his Way. And are we not ready to be turned aside, either by Rashness on the one Hand, or Remissness on the other. Thus we must wholly distrust ourselves, and see that all Furniture, Strength, Righteousness and Salvation is with him: *For the Hand of our God is on all that seek him for Good.* His strengthning Hand, his healing Hand, his helping Hand, his encouraging Hand, his through-bearing Hand is upon all that seek him for Good; upon all that seek him as their Rest, that seek him as their All, that seek him in Christ, where only he is to be found. 2*dly*. It is to have some stayed Thoughts, what we are that are the Parties who are to join in that solemn Bond. Why? You see who they are in the Preamble of that Bond: *We all and every one of us, tho' sensible of the Deceitfulness of our own Hearts*—We have deceitful Hearts all of us, and the Parties who may join in this Work, are such as have deceitful Hearts, and are sensible that their Hearts are deceitful above all Things, and desperately wicked, and therefore need Vows and Covenants, Bonds of God's own Appointment, in an evangelical Way, to be made Use of to bind them faster to the Lord. And what Need have we of the Spirit of Faith, and of Gospel-Humiliation, that we may ly in the Dust before the Lord, in a Sense of the Corruption of our Natures, and

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of the Deceitfulneſs of our Hearts? But then, *3dly*. our Faſting, and Afflicting ourſelves, imply our Acting Faith upon God's Promiſe of finding our Way. We have been Covenant-Breakers, and ſo loſt our Way, and have dealt very treacherouſly with our God. Our Way is very dark and difficult, if we conſider that we are Sinners in the firſt *Adam*, and, by our Unbelief, have rejected precious Chriſt the ſecond *Adam*, the Lord from Heaven. Innumerable perſonal Evils compaſs us about; and we have our Hand deeply dipt in all the Provocations of the Day and Time wherein we live: We are the Men and Women that have ſinned againſt the Lord God of *Iſrael*, with us are found many and great Tranſgreſſions againſt the Lord our God: *We with our Fathers have ſinned; we have been too long the Workers of Iniquity*. Let us look back then to what we are by Nature, and to what we have done by our Sins of Heart and Life, in Thought, Word and Action; by all which we have been drawing down the Lord's righteous Anger and Diſpleaſure upon ourſelves and theſe Lands: But, we ſay, our Faſting, and Afflicting ourſelves, imply the acting of Faith upon God's Promiſe of finding our Way. Why? Where is the Promiſe, then, of guiding us in the right Way? We may ſee it in the 50th Chapter of *Jer*. 4 and 5 Verſes, *In thoſe Days the Children of* Iſrael *ſhall come, they and the Children of* Judah *together: They ſhall ask the Way to* Zion *with their Faces thitherward*, &c. Here it is promiſed of *Iſrael* and *Judah*, *they ſhall come*; whatever Obſtructions may be in the Way, *they ſhall come*, ſaith the Lord. What Obſtructions may be in the Way of the On-going of this covenanting Work of Reformation, we cannot tell; but we hope the Time will come, when *Iſrael* and *Judah*,

Scotland and other Nations joining with her, shall come asking the Way to *Zion*, with their Faces thitherward. For this End let it be our Concern to behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the Sin of the World, that he may take away our Sins, and the Sins of these Lands, as in one Day; and bring us to join ourselves unto the Lord, in a perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten. So much for the Remarks.

We now proceed, by divine Assistance, to speak of the Matter of the Oath and Bond under Consideration; and this Bond contains nothing but what is laid down in the Word of God, and therefore the Matter of it is morally binding upon each of our Consciences, whether we explicitly enter into it or not. This we shall endeavour to shew as we go along, and as the Lord assisteth.

The Bond may be divided into three Parts. 1*st*. The Preface or Preamble of the Bond. 2*dly*. The explicit Matter of the Bond. 3*dly*. The Conclusion of the Bond. Of each of these we shall endeavour to speak a little for Explication. And,

First, The Preface or Preamble of the Bond, which runs in these Words: *We, all and every one of us, tho' sensible of the Unbelief and Deceitfulness of our own Hearts, and however frequently perplexed with Doubts and Fears anent our actual Believing; yet, desiring to essay, in the Lord's Strength, and in Obedience to his Command, to glorify God, by believing his Word of Grace contained in his Covenant of Promise, and, in the Faith of his Promise, to devote ourselves unto the Lord in a Covenant of Duty.*

Now, in this Preface we may notice, in the *first* Place, the Parties entring into this Bond and Covenant, *we, all and every one of us*. 2*dly*. Their Character: (1.) They are no other than sinful Men and

and Women, who have fallen in the first *Adam*, and who have deceitful and unbelieving Hearts: (2.) They are such as, in some Measure, are sensible of the Deceitfulness and Unbelief of their own Hearts: (3.) They are such as may have Doubts about their actual Believing: (4.) They are such as desire to essay to glorify God; 1. By believing his Word of Grace contained in his Covenant of Promise; 2. They desire, in the Faith of his Promise, to devote themselves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty; and (3.) we may notice the Way and Manner they are essaying all this: Why? It is in the Lord's Strength, and in Obedience to his Command.

But then, *Secondly*, as we have the Preface, so we have the explicit Matter of the Bond, which we proposed also to explain a little; and the Bond, as to the explicit Matter of it, may be again divided into two Parts. 1*st*. There is in it a solemn Declaration and Profession of our essaying, through Grace, *to take hold of God's gracious Covenant, by Faith, as the same is revealed to us in the glorious Gospel*. But, 2*dly*. in this explicit Matter of the Bond, there is likeways a solemn Oath and Promise, in which we, in the Strength of Grace, devote ourselves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty, solemnly promising and swearing, that we, *in the Strength of his promised Grace, shall walk in his Ways, keep his Judgments and Commandments, and hearken to his Voice*. Of each of these in Order. And,

First, We are to make a solemn Declaration and Profession of our essaying, through Grace, to take hold, by Faith, of God's gracious Covenant revealed to us in the glorious Gospel. And here we shall notice some Things for clearing this Matter. In the *first* Place, we have the Solemnity of this Declaration

claration and Profeſſion of our Faith in God's Covenant of Promiſe; and this is expreſſed in the following Words. *We do, with our Hands lifted up to the Moſt High God, hereby profeſs, and before God, Angels, and Men, ſolemnly declare, that, through the Grace of God, and according to the Meaſure of his Grace given unto us, we do, with our whole Hearts, take, hold of the* LORD JESUS CHRIST, *as the only Propitiation for our Sins; his Righteouſneſs, as as the only Foundation of our Acceſs to and Acceptance with God; his Covenant of free and rich Promiſes, as our only Charter for the heavenly Inheritance; his Word, for our perfect and only Rule of Faith and Practice; his Spirit, for our alone Guide to lead us into all Truth revealed in his holy Word, unto which nothing at any Time is to be added, whether by new Revelations of the Spirit, or Traditions of Men. We avouch the Lord to be our God,* &c.

Now we have, 1*ſt.* in this ſolemn Declaration and Profeſſion, the Solemnity of it pointed out to us, in that it is made with our Hands lifted up to the Moſt High God; with Hands lifted up, and therefore with the Solemnity of an Oath; for the Angel of the Covenant, *Rev.* x. who appears *clothed with a Cloud, and having a Rainbow upon his Head, whoſe Face is as the Sun, and his Feet as Pillars of Fire, he lifted up his Hand to Heaven, when he did ſwear by him that liveth for ever and ever.* And the Lifting up of our Hands is an Expreſſion of the Lifting up of our Souls to the Moſt High God in the Acts of Faith, Love, Obedience, Reverence, and godly Fear. 2*dly.* We may notice the Witneſſes before whom this ſolemn Declaration and Profeſſion is made. It is before God, Angels, and Men; before God, who is the Searcher of Hearts, and who is graciouſly preſent among

mong the worſhipping Aſſemblies of his People; and before Angels, who attend the publick worſhipping Aſſemblies of the Church, and obſerve our Behaviour and Deportment, as we ſee in 1 *Cor.* xi. 10. *For this Cauſe ought the Woman to have Power on her Head, becauſe of the Angels;* that is, the Woman's Head ought to be covered in worſhipping Aſſemblies, becauſe ſome of rhe Angels are ordinarily preſent in them, and obſerve the decent Attire and Behaviour of Goſpel-Worſhippers: And it is alſo before Men, becauſe we are all Witneſſes one againſt another, of the ſolemn Engagements we come under. 3*dly*. We may notice the Object of our Worſhip, to whom this ſolemn Declaration and Profeſſion is made. Why? It is to the Moſt High God, the only living and true God, the ſole Object of all religious Worſhip and Adoration. 4*thly*. We may notice the Matter of this ſolemn Declaration and Profeſſion; and, 1. we ſolemnly profeſs, that, through Grace, we believe on the Son of God, and take hold of him in his Perſon and Offices; 2. That, through Jeſus Chriſt, we avouch the Lord to be our God, 5*thly*. We may notice the Manner of this ſolemn Declaration and Profeſſion; and it is to be done in the Goſpel-Method and Manner, *namely*, through Grace, and according to the Meaſure of the Grace of God given unto us. It is not to be done in our own Strength, but in the Strength of Grace, and according to the Meaſure of Grace given to us, according to the Meaſure of Grace we have been helped to receive, out of the Fulneſs of Grace that is in Chriſt, the gracious Head of the new Covenant; to ſet about this ſolemn Work otherways, were to do it not in a Goſpel-Manner.

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But that we may discourse a little farther concerning this solemn Declaration and Profession, we shall endeavour, by the Lord's Assistance, *first*, to shew that it was the Practice of the Lord's People, in entring into a Covenant of Duty, to profess their Faith in God's Covenant of Promise, and to avouch the Lord, through Jesus Christ, to be their God: 2*dly*. Explain more particularly the Matter contained in this solemn Declaration and Profession.

We proceed to the *first* of these, *namely*, To shew that it was the Practice of the Lord's People, in entring into a Covenant of Duty, to profess their Faith in God's Covenant of Promise, and to avouch the Lord, through Jesus Christ, for their God. We see this goes first in Order, if we are helped to manage it in a Gospel Way and Manner: And this will appear, if we consider some of the Covenants that the Church and People of God entred into, as we may see, 2 *Chron.* xv. 12. where we have an Account of the Covenant they entred into in the Days of *Asa*. *And they entred into a Covenant, to seek the Lord God of their Fathers with all their Heart:* By this Seeking of the Lord, you are to understand the whole of religious Worship and Duty. The Covenant of Duty they entred into, was to seek the Lord with all their Heart; to seek him in Christ; to seek him according to the Revelation he had made of himself in the Covenant he had made with his eternal Son before the Beginning of all Ages. You see the Object of their Worship was the Lord God of *Israel*; they were to act Faith upon him as the God of *Israel*, as the Lord God of their Fathers. And how was he the Lord God of their Fathers, but in the Covenant he made with *Abraham?* Which Covenant was expressed to this Purpose:

Purpose: *Fear not*, Abraham, *I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward.* I am *God Almighty, walk before me, and be thou perfect.* In consequence of this *Jehovah* takes that Name to himself, The God of *Abraham*, the God of *Isaac*, and the God of *Jacob*. Thus our Lord Jesus proved the Resurrection of the Dead against the *Sadducees; Have you not heard that it is written, I am the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Isaac, *and the God of* Jacob? *He is not the the God of the Dead, but of the Living?* The Children of Believers are called the Children of the Faith of *Abraham*. Thus the very first Article of this Covenant of Duty, made in *Asa*'s Time, was just a Profession of their acting Faith upon God as the God of their Fathers. See also 2 *Chron.* xxxiv. 31. *And the King stood in his Place, and made a Covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his Commandments, and his Testimonies, and his Statutes, with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, to perform the Words of the Covenant which are written in this Book.* Verse 32. *And he caused all that were present in* Jerusalem *and* Benjamin *to stand to it, and the Inhabitants of* Jerusalem *did according to the Covenant of God, the God of their Fathers.* Why? This Covenant was made with the Lord their God, and the very leading Article in it was their Faith in him as the Lord their God. And in like Manner we have it in the Book of *Ezra*; that Covenant that was made in the Time of *Ezra* was to the same Purpose, as we may see in the 10th *Chapter* of his Book: *Now therefore let us make a Covenant with our God, to put away all the Wives, and such as are born of them, according to the Counsel of my Lord, and of such as tremble at the Commandment of our God. Now therefore let us make a Covenant with our God.* The Covenant of Grace was, in the Substance of it, published

bliſhed at *Sinai*, in theſe Words, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the Land of* Egypt, *and out of the Houſe of Bondage.* This was the leading Article of this Covenant of Duty which was made in the Days of *Ezra*, *namely*, to lay hold on God's Covenant made with Chriſt, to take or acknowledge God as their God in Chriſt. They were to act Faith on him as the Lord their God : He gave us out the Law at Mount *Sinai*, juſt as it were ingrafted upon Goſpel-Grace, that we might walk in the Strength of his Grace, in doing his Commandments. To the ſame Purpoſe you may ſee, *Neh.* x, 28, 29. and *Pſalm* lxxvi. 11. *Vow, and pay to the Lord your God ; let all that be round about him bring Preſents to him that ought to be feared.* We can never vow aright, unleſs we act Faith upon the Lord as our God, and we will never pay our Vows unleſs we act Faith upon him as our God. Vow to the Lord your God, and pay. So we ſee that the Church and People of God, in renewing their Covenants, had it for their Practice to act Faith upon God's Covenant of Promiſe, and to avouch the Lord, through Jeſus Chriſt, to be their God : And ſo it is expreſſed in the Bond under Conſideration ; *We do, in the Strength of Grace, and according to the Meaſure of Grace given unto us, take hold of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, &c. Some may miſtake theſe Expreſſions, and, think them ſtrong, and that they point forth that none are to enter into this Bond, as it is laid, except they have Aſſurance of their being in a State of Grace : But it may be conſidered, in the *firſt* Place, that, when the Preface of the Bond is compared with the Declaration, it will appear that doubting Chriſtians may join in this ſolemn Work ; for the Parties entring into this Bond are ſuch who have deceitful unbelieving Hearts, who are ſenſible of the

the Deceitfulneſs and Unbelief of their Hearts, and who frequently have Doubts and Fears anent their actual Believing; yet they deſire to eſſay to glorify God by Believing; and it cannot be queſtioned, but it is our Duty to eſſay to believe in the Strength of Grace, and according to the Meaſure of God's Grace given us. 2*dly*. It muſt be conſidered, that we can eſſay no Duty but in the Strength of Grace, and according to the Meaſure of Grace given unto us. If we ſit down at the Table of the Lord, we muſt eſſay, in the Strength of Grace, to take hold of Chriſt, and we muſt do it according to the Meaſure of Grace given to us; for there is a particular Application in Faith, and we muſt do it according to the Meaſure of Grace given to us, tho' it be ſmall like a Grain of Muſtard-Seed, like the ſmoking Flax, even ſo ſmall, that perhaps it is, for ordinary, out of Sight with us whether we have any Grace at all; yet it muſt be according to the Meaſure of Grace we have received, and not what others have received, becauſe there is a particular Application in Faith; and ſo we muſt believe for ourſelves, and none other can believe for us. 3*dly*. It muſt be conſidered, that the Deſign of this ſolemn Declaration is not to declare that we have actually believed, which is clear, as I have ſhewn from comparing the Preface and Declaration together; but it is to make an Eſſay at actual Believing, which cannot miſs to be our Duty; and thoſe who are in Doubts anent their actual Believing may and ought to eſſay actual Believing, and in our Eſſay at Believing we are to expreſs our Faith, and not to hamper the Expreſſions of our Faith with Expreſſions of our Unbelief. 4*thly*. We find the Old Teſtament Church expreſſing their Faith in going about this Duty, as is clear from the Scriptures

we have noticed: And why ſhould not the New Teſtament Church profeſs and expreſs their Faith in going about this Duty? *Ezra* x. 2. *Now therefore let us make a Covenant with the Lord our God.* They could not acknowledge the Lord to be their God, but according to the Meaſure of Grace they had received, no more than we; and their Avouching the Lord for their God, implies their taking hold of Chriſt by Faith, in the Strength of Grace, and according to the Meaſure of the Grace of God which they had received; and ſo are we to eſſay the ſame Duty, in the Strength of Grace, as well as they did before us. By this you may ſee that theſe Words are neceſſary in the Bond, and it could not have been otherways, if done in a Goſpel-Way. We muſt go about this ſolemn Duty in a Way bodding Good at the Hand of God, not in a doubting Way. Whatever Toſſings we have with our Unbelief, let us not bring it in when we are to make a ſolemn Profeſſion of our Faith in Chriſt; but let us ſet about this Duty, bodding well of his Grace. We muſt not ſay, If we have Grace, we take hold of Chriſt, and of the Covenant made with him; if we have Grace, we believe in Chriſt: That is juſt a mixing Unbelief with our Faith: This is no ſuitable Form of Speech to bring before God. How would a Maſter take it off the Hand of his Servant, if, concerning his Commandment, the Servant ſhould ſay, If I obey you, I do obey? We muſt not ſay, If we have already believed, we take hold of God's Covenant of Grace, and devote ourſelves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty; but that we deſire, in the Strength of Grace, to glorify God by preſent Believing his Word of Grace. We never owed ſo much to Unbelief, as to foſter it in the ſolemn Profeſſion of our Faith.

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Having thus ſhewn you, that it was the Practice of the Lord's People, in entring into a Covenant of Duty, to profeſs their Faith in God's Covenant of Promiſe, and to avouch the Lord, through Jeſus Chriſt, to be their God, we proceed, 2*dly*. by divine Aſſiſtance, to explain more particularly the Matter contained in this ſolemn Declaration and Profeſſion of our Faith, in which, by a ſolemn Oath and Promiſe, we devote ourſelves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty. We tell you, there is not one Word in it, but what is contained in the Word of God, and therefore we with Confidence open it up unto you.

In this ſolemn Promiſe and Engagement to Duty we may notice, then, in the *firſt* Place, the Solemnity of the Engagement. We promiſe and ſwear, by the great Name of the Lord our God, according to the Example of the Lord's People recorded in the Scripture, who came under an Engagement to be the Lord's by a ſolemn Oath, Pſalm cxix. 106. *I have ſworn, and I will perform, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.*

2*dly*. A Profeſſion of Faith in the Lord; for we ſwear by the great Name of the Lord our God, and his Name is a great Name; it is wonderful, and unſpeakable by all created Beings; and we are to make Mention of his Name, at all Times, with holy Awe and Reverence, eſpecially in ſwearing by his Name. We ſay, there is, in the Matter of this ſolemn Declaration and Profeſſion, a preſent Profeſſion of Faith in the Lord as our God. And here we may notice, 1. That Faith takes along its Helps and Auxiliaries with it, in as much as the Profeſſion is made through the Grace of God: And this anſwers to the Commandment given by *Paul* to *Timothy*, *And thou* Timothy, *my Son, be ſtrong in the Grace*

Grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2. It says, there is a Deniedness to Self, and Grace received; as if the Person should say, O! It is but a small Measure of Grace that I have received; but this must be an Exercise in the Strength of Christ, and in a Dependence upon the Fulness of Grace that is in him: And this Expression, *In the Strength of Christ, and according to the Measure of Grace received*, implies in it Faith's Persuasion that there is a Fulness of Grace, in Christ the Fountain of Grace, to carry us through this Duty, and a Concern that every Grain of Grace received may be in Exercise in this Duty of Lifting up the Hand to the Most High God. 3. It says, There is a Mint at a present Taking hold of the Person of Christ. We do, in the Strength of Grace, take hold of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the alone Propitiation for our Sins. We take hold of his Person; Faith receives him in his Person, *John* i. 14. *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his Glory* All Things were made by him who is the Word, and yet the Word was made Flesh? *We beheld his Glory, the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.* The Word, in the first Language, signifies, *We did take a stayed and fixed View of the Glory of Christ;* and those who beheld his Glory were the same Persons of whom it is said, that *they received Christ, and believed on his Name*, Verse 12. so that Faith is a present Believing. There must then be a Believing in the present Time; and this ought to be a believing Time with us: *Behold, now is the accepted Time; behold, now is the Day of Salvation?* But our Believing in the present Time, does not say that we believe with present Comfort, Sense, or Feeling. No; there may be a Believing, and yet a Doubting; strong Faith, and

and yet ſtrong Unbelief, as you read of *Heman* in the 77th *Pſalm*. He had ſtrong Doubts, and yet ſtrong Faith; there is, I ſay, a preſent Mint at taking hold of the Perſon of Chriſt. It is a Scripture Expreſſion, to *take hold; let a Man take hold of my Strength, that he may make Peace with me, and he ſhall make Peace with me.* Let him take hold of my Strength, *that is*, my eternal Son, the Horn of Salvation raiſed up in the Houſe of *David*. Faith is a Taking hold of Chriſt in his Perſon; for we take hold of him as the true God and eternal Life; we take hold of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. Chriſt is called the *Lord*, which is the Rendring of *Jehovah* in the Old Teſtament. Why, then, we take hold of *Jehovah*, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as the true God and eternal Life, as he is Lord of all, and as our Lord and our God. This was the Way that *Thomas* acted Faith upon him: Thomas *anſwered and ſaid, My Lord, and my God.* We take hold of him as our Lord and King, to rule over us, to ſubdue Sin in us, and to ſubdue our Hearts to himſelf; as our Lord, to rule us by his Word and Spirit, to defend and protect us by his Almighty Power; as the Captain of the Lord's Hoſt, that is mighty to ſave. We take hold of him whoſe Name alone is *Jehovah*, the Moſt High over all the Earth. Who have more Need to take hold of him than we, to ſave us from the Guilt, from the Filth, and from the Power of Sin? We take hold of the Lord Jeſus, who hath ſaid, *I will ſave you from all your Uncleanneſſes.* We take hold of a whole Chriſt, of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as the *Meſſias*, as well as Jeſus, and as Lord. *Chriſt* is a *Greek* Word, and ſignifies the *Meſſias*, the Anointed. We take hold of God's Anointed; of him whom God has anointed as Mediator of the new Covenant, and to whom,

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as such, he has given the holy Spirit without Measure. He was anointed to a threefold Office; anointed to be our Prophet, to teach us; our Priest, to satisfy Justice for us, and to reconcile us to God; and, as our King, to subdue us to himself, and to rule us by his Word and Spirit.

But then we take hold of him, in the *first* Place, as the only Propitiaton for our Sins, as we have it, *Rom.* iii. 25. *Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past, through the Forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this Time, his Righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* We invite you, then, this Day, to take hold of him as the Propitiation for your Sins; *we are justified freely by his Grace*, saith the Apostle *Paul* to the *Romans*. How came you by Redemption? might one have said. Why? saith he, through Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation for the Sins of sinful Men of *Adam*'s Family, and for me, *Paul*, as well as others, who myself was a Blasphemer, but through his Propitiation I obtained Mercy. Here is a Call and Summons, to every Conscience here, to believe in Jesus: We call you, in his Name, to believe in Jesus, and that with a particular Application to your own Souls. To whom is he set forth to be a Propitiation? Why? It is just to the guilty Sinner, the Law-condemned Sinner: And we warn you, O Sinnner, that, if you be a final Rejecter of this Propitiation, to Hell you must go, for otherways God would not be just, and the Justifier of them that believe in Jesus. There is no Way of being accepted with God, but this Way, by this Propitiation that God hath set forth: And we make Intimation to the vilest Sinner in all this Company, there

there is Help in God for you, through this Propitiation: If thy Conſcience is awakned, you will perhaps think there is no Mercy with God for you. Are you then ſaying, There is no Help in God for me, who have run away all my Days from God? Why? Poor Sinner, we tell you, there is Mercy with him for you, tho' never ſo miſerable; for he is juſt, and the Juſtifier of them which believe in Jeſus: He is juſt, but yet the Juſtifier of all ſuch as believe in Jeſus, as do venture upon this Propitiation; venture, then, on *Immanuel*, God with us.

2*dly*. As we are to take hold of him as the only Propitiation for our Sins, ſo we profeſs here to take hold of his Righteouſneſs, as the only Foundation of our Acceſs to and Acceptance with God. This alſo is Scripture-Language, *Heb.* x. 19. *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt by the Blood of Jeſus, by a new and living Way which he hath conſecrated for us through the Vail, that is to ſay, his Fleſh; and having an High-Prieſt over the Houſe of God; let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Aſſurance of Faith, having our Hearts ſprinkled from an evil Conſcience, and our Bodies waſhed with pure Water.* O! Here is the Way of Acceſs to and Acceptance with God! *Having therefore Boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt by the Blood of Jeſus, by a new and living Way*, namely, by the Way of his eternal Righteouſneſs which he hath fulfilled for us, let us draw near. You may all draw near to God in this Way; he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, who fulfilled all Righteouſneſs, and for his Righteouſneſs Sake is he well pleaſed. O! Then, you are called to take hold of him as the Lord your Righteouſneſs; for this is the Name whereby he ſhall be called, THE LORD

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OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS; and you never give him his Name, O Sinner, till you call him, *The Lord my Righteouſneſs. Surely in the Lord, ſhall one ſay, have I Righteouſneſs and Strength.*

3*dly*. Here we are to take hold of his Covenant of free and rich Promiſes, as our only Charter for the heavenly Inheritance. This alſo is Scripture Language, *Iſa.* lvi. 6. *Alſo the Sons of the Stranger, that join themſelves to the Lord, to ſerve him, and to love the Name of the Lord to be his Servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my Covenant.* Then, you ſee, the Sons of the Stranger are warranted to take hold of God's Covenant; *The Promiſe is to you and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* Acts ii. 39. *Then, ſaid* Peter, *Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion of Sins,* Verſe 38. *For the Promiſe is to you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God ſhall call.* Now, what is the Promiſe? Why? It is juſt the Charter of the Covenant, *I will be your God, and you ſhall be my People:* I will be your God, reconciled through my eternal Son, and you ſhall be my People accepted by me through him. The Promiſe is to you, to you, O Sinner! Will you let the Promiſe ſlip then? The Promiſe is to you, and to your Children; it is ſpoken to you, it is given to you, and therefore muſt be received by you, and believed by you; to you is the Word of this Salvation ſent.

4*thly*. We are to take his Word as our perfect and only Rule of Faith and Practice. This is alſo Scripture-Stile, and what we are called to, *Iſa.* viii. 20. *To the Law and to the Teſtimony; if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is*

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no Light in them. We have a more ſure Word of Prophecy, *to which*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *we do well to take heed, as to a Light ſhining in dark Place.* It is more ſure than that Viſion which the Apoſtles had from the excellent Glory when they were with Chriſt on the holy Mount, 2 *Pet.* i. 17, 18, 19. It is a perfect Rule; *The Law of the Lord is perfect;* It is an unerring Rule; therefore, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes, then ſhall I not be aſhamed when I have a Reſpect to all thy Commandments.*

5*thly.* We are to take his Spirit for our alone Guide to lead us into all Truth. This much is promiſed of him by our Lord, *John* xiv. 26. *But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my Name, he ſhall teach you all Things, and bring all Things to your Remembrance whatſoever I have ſaid unto you.* And *John* xvi. 13. *When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, he will guide you into all Truth.* We are then to depend on him for Guiding in all Things, to help us faithfully to bear Witneſs for Chriſt in our Day and Generation: We are to take him for our Remembrancer, to bring all Things to our Remembrance.

But then, as it contains a Profeſſion of our Faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; ſo our Swearing by the the great Name of the Lord our God contains alſo a Profeſſion of our Faith in God, through Jeſus Chriſt, as our God: Therefore it is ſaid, *We avouch the Lord to be our God:* And this alſo is what we are warranted to do, and called to do; we are warranted, if we conſider it was the Cry of Chriſt as our publick Head, *Pſalm* lxxxix. 26. *He ſhall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my Salvation.* If it was his Cry as a Head, then all of us may ſay it over through him as his

Members. We are called, as well as warranted, to avouch the Lord to be our God, *Jer.* iii. 4 and 19. compared; *Wilt thou not from this Time cry unto me, My Father? And I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me.* The Lord Jesus Christ, as the new Covenant-Head, has acquired a new Right to God, as his God and your God; therefore he saith to *Mary, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.* We are then to put in our Claim and Title, in Christ's Right to God, as our our Father and our God: We are to avouch the Lord to be our God. O! We call you, Sirs, to chuse him to be your God and Portion: *Thou art my Portion, saith my Soul, therefore will I hope in thee.* Psalm xvi. 5, 6. *The Lord is the Portion of mine Inheritance, and of my Cup; thou maintainest my Lot: The Lines are fallen unto me in pleasant Places, yea, I have a goodly Heritage.* These are the Words of the new Covenant-Head immediately, and we are to put in our Note with him, and say, *The Lord is the Portion of mine Inheritance: The Lines are fallen unto me in pleasant Places.* O put in your Note! What will be your last Words? Will you not say The Lord shall be my God. *Thus saith the Lord, I will be your God*: And what saith Faith, The Lord shall be my God. O say it, young People! This was the Language of *Jacob*, in his young Days, at *Bethel*, *The Lord shall be my God.* O, it is good Language for you that are young People, The Lord shall be my God: Look to him to help you to say it. When alone *Jacob* said it, when alone at *Bethel*. O say it, old People, The Lord shall be my God. Will you resolve that nothing shall ease or please you but himself. *O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his Seat!* O let every one here say, The Lord shall be

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my God; for now is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation. *To-day if you will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts as in the Provocation.*

But then, in the Matter contained in this solemn Declaration and Profession of our Faith, in which we, by a solemn Oath and Promise, devote ourselves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty, we have not only the Solemnity of the Engagement, and a solemn Profession of our Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Manner we have been hearing, and in God through him as our God; but, *3dly.* the Matter of our solemn Vow and Engagement that we vow and swear unto, namely, *That we shall walk in his Way, keep his Judgments and Commandments, and hearken to his Voice.* This is what we are all bound to by the moral Law; and it has been the Practice of the Saints in Scripture to bind themselves to these Things, *Psalm* cxix. 57. *Thou art my Portion, O Lord; I have said that I will keep thy Words.* Verse 106. *I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.* There cannot be better Work for us, than that we walk in his Way, keep his Judgments and Commandments, and hearken to his Voice. We are to hearken to his Voice in the Law; we are to hearken to it in the Gospel, to believe in his Son Jesus Christ; *for this is his Commandment, that we believe in the Name of his Son Jesus Christ.*

But more particularly, in the Matter of our solemn Vow and Engagement to Duty, we promise and swear, in the 1*st* Place, *That we shall, by the Lord's Grace, continue and abide in the Profession, Faith and Obedience of the true reformed Religion, in Doctrine, Worship, Presbyterial Church-Government and Discipline of the House of God, laid down in his Word, contained in our Standards,*

Standards, and ſworn to in our ſolemn Covenants. A Summary of the Doctrine is contained in our Confeſſion of Faith; ſome View we have of our Worſhip in the Directory for Worſhip, our Diſcipline is ſomewhat pointed out in the Books of Diſcipline, and in our Acts of Aſſembly in reforming Times; but we do not formally ſwear either to the Books of Diſcipline, or the Acts of Aſſembly in the moſt reforming Periods, but to the Subſtance of Presbyterial Diſcipline as laid out in them, and to theſe Branches of Diſcipline in them that are moſt agreeable to the Word of God. For you may obſerve that neither the Books of Diſcipline, nor the Acts of Aſſembly in reforming Periods, are expreſly mentioned in the Bond; and as it is our Duty from the World, to contend for *the Faith once delivered to the Saints*, and to ſtrive together for the Faith of the Goſpel; ſo you may obſerve, that through the whole Bond the Word of God is the primary Rule, as it ought to be. Thus you ſee that there is no Ground to object, that by ſwearing to the Diſcipline we become engaged to ſupport what is defective as to the Diſcipline, in the Books of Diſcipline, or in the Acts of Aſſembly. And as to Presbyterial Church-Government, you have a View of it in the Form of Church-Government, which is printed along with the Confeſſion of Faith. Now, here is nothing but what is our Duty, and what we are bound unto, whether we enter into this Bond or not. Is it not his Commandment to all, *Buy the Truth, and ſell it not*? To buy it at any Rate, and ſell it at no Rate? Is it not the Duty of the Church of Chriſt to ſtrive together for the Faith of the Goſpel? So we are bound, by the ſecond Commandment of the moral Law, to preſerve all Chriſt's Ordinances and Inſtitutions pure and intire, whether as to Worſhip, Diſcipline,

Diſcipline, or Government, in our ſeveral Places and Stations; and convey them to Poſterity, that Race unto Race may ſhew his mighty Deeds.

But then, under this Article of the Bond, we renounce and promiſe, by the Lord's Grace, to *contend and teſtify againſt all contrary Evils, Errors, and Corruptions, particularly Popery*, which is opened up to you, in moſt of its Branches and Corruptions, in our national Covenant, which you have along with the Bond in which we renew the ſame.

We promiſe alſo to contend againſt *Prelacy*, which, as to Corruption in Government, and Superſtition in Worſhip, is much allied to Popery: For, as their Worſhip is corrupted by a great Variety of ſuperſtitious Rites and Ceremonies, ſo likeways their Government is intirely antiſcriptural, ſeeing they inveſt their Biſhops and Prelates, (which are Creatures merely of human Invention) with the ſole Power of Ordination and Juriſdiction, and, upon the Matter, derive their whole eccleſiaſtical Powers from the *Eraſtian* Supremacy of the civil Magiſtrate; which is ſuch an *Eraſtian* Way and Manner of Government, as is deſtructive of the beautiful Order of Chriſt's Houſe.

We likeways renounce *Deiſm*, which is a Principle prevailing with many at this Day, who deny the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and pretend that natural Religion is ſufficient to guide Men to Happineſs, and revealed Religion is not neceſſary.

We likeways renounce *Arianiſm*, which is that groſs Hereſy denying the proper, true and ſupreme Deity of the Son of God, and of the Holy Ghoſt.

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We also renounce *Arminianism*, which is a System containing many gross Errors; such as, notwithstanding of the Fall, Man retains a Freedom of Will to that which is spiritually good; that the Grace of God is not irresistible and efficacious of itself; that Believers in Christ may fall totally and finally away from a State of Grace; that Election depends upon foreseen good Works; and that Christ has merited Grace to all Mankind; that the Reason why some are chosen to Salvation, and others rejected, is for the foreseen Faith and good Works of the one, and for the foreseen Unbelief and evil Works of the other; whereas *Jehovah* saith, *I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy; and whom he will he hardeneth.* Rom. ix. 11. *For the Children being not yet born, neither having done any Good or Evil, that the Purpose of God, according to Election, might stand, not of Works, but of him that calleth.* Verse 13. *As is is written*, Jacob *have I loved, but* Esau *have I hated.*

Again, we likeways renounce *Independency*, which is a Denying of the Unity of the true Catholick Church of Christ, pretending that every single Congregation has all Power of Jurisdiction and Order so within itself, as noway to depend upon and be subordinated and subjected to the Authority of Synods or Assemblies, directly contrary to the 15th Chap. of the *Acts of the Apostles*, and other Places of Scripture; and by which Means they divide the Body of Christ, and open a Door to all Manner of Abominations, and, whatever Errors fall in among them, they incapacitate themselves for purging out the same.

As also we renounce *Latitudinarian Tenets, that is*, the prevailing Opinion of this Day, that Communion is to be kept with all that hold what they call

call the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity, whether they be Presbyterians, Prelatiſts, or Independents; that is to ſay, Presbyterial Government, tho' the only Government Chriſt has inſtituted in his Houſe, may be given up with; and the Decryers and Betrayers of it are guilty of no Scandal, that ought to be purged, or that may mar their Fellowſhip with the Church of Chriſt. But if Men once take the Freedom to give up with any of the Inſtitutions of Chriſt, with any of the Truths of God, and are boldly adventuring to buy and ſell the Truths of Chriſt, concerning the Order and Government of his Church, they bid very fair, in a ſhort Time, to pay little Regard to what they call the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity; for, when the Government and Order of Chriſt's Inſtitution is once laid aſide, every Man is left at Liberty to judge for himſelf what is eſſential to Religion, and what not. They are called Latitudinarian Tenets, becauſe they give a Latitude, a Toleration, in effect, to every Thing that private Judgment ſets up to be right; and becauſe theſe Principles, overthrowing the divine Right of Presbyterial Government, do thereby bury the publick Judgment of the Courts of Chriſt; and becauſe the Terms of Communion that ſeem to be gone into by ſuch a Set of Men, are wider and of a greater Latitude than thoſe which Chriſt himſelf has laid down in his Word; by which Means a Door is ſet open to Satan to ſow his Tares; every Thing is caſt looſe, and God is provoked to give up ſuch People to ſtrong Deluſions, to believe a Lie; as is the Caſe of the Men of theſe Principles in the Day wherein we live.

But then, 2*dly*. in like Manner, we promiſe and ſwear, *That, by all Means which are lawful and warrantable for us, according to the Word of God, we ſhall,*

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in our ſeveral Stations and Callings, endeavour the Reformation of Religion in England *and* Ireland, *in Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline and Government, according to the Word of God; and to promote our covenanted Uniformity in Religion, Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, Form of Church-Government, and Directory for Worſhip, as they were received by the Church of* Scotland.

This is the Subſtance of the ſolemn League and Covenant ſworn both by *Scotland* and *England* about an Hundred Years ago. It was a lawful and laudable Aſſociation of theſe Kingdoms, for promoting true Religion, for preferring the Glory of God, the Increaſe of Chriſt's Kingdom, to all Things in the World, and ſubordinating all Things thereto, and to the Will of God revealed in his Word. It was a profeſſed Subjection of the three Nations to Chriſt, in their ſwearing Allegiance to *Zion*'s King, and was in ſome Meaſure the fulfilling of that Prophecy, *Hoſ.* i. 11. *Then ſhall the Children of* Judah, *and the Children of* Iſrael, *appoint themſelves one Head*; and of that, *Jer.* l. 4, 5. Now, this Oath and Vow being ſo lawful, laudable and warrantable, it is certainly binding on us, whether we come under it, in our own Perſons, or not, as much as the Oath made by *Joſhua* and the Princes of the Congregation of *Iſrael*, to the *Gibeonites*, was binding upon their Poſterity; and that the Oath made to the *Gibeonites* was binding on Poſterity, is clear from the Famine ſent in the Days of *David*, for the Sin of *Saul* in ſlaying ſome of the *Gibeonites*, altho' that Oath had been ſworn to the *Gibeonites* ſome Hundred of Years before the Violation of it by that bloody Action of *Saul*; and the Anger of the Lord was not turned away in that Judgment of Famine, till ſeven Sons of *Saul* were hanged up before the

the Sun : And we have Reaſon to fear that the Lord will, in as awful and evident a Manner, avenge the Quarrel of his broken Covenant in the Iſles of the Sea ; and that the Judgment, as in the Inſtance now hinted at, will fall heavily, and in a remarkable Way and Manner, upon the Ring-leaders in the Defection and Apoſtaſy of theſe Times, tho' the beſt may have ſome Share in the Stroke, ſeeing all are involved in the Sin of the Day.

3*dly*. In the ſame Manner we promiſe and ſwear, by the great Name of the Lord our God, *That we ſhall, in our ſeveral Places and Callings, encourage and ſtrengthen one another's Hands, in purſuing the End of our Oath and Covenant ; and that we ſhall endeavour a Life and Converſation becoming the Goſpel of Chriſt ; and that, in our perſonal Callings and particular Families, we ſhall ſtudy to be good Examples to one another, of Godlineſs and Righteouſneſs, and of every Duty we owe to God and Man ; and that we ſhall not give up ourſelves to a deteſtable Indifferency and Neutrality in the Cauſe of God ; but, denying ourſelves and our own Things, we ſhall, above all Things, ſeek the Honour of God, and the Good of his Cauſe and People, and that, through Grace, forſaking the Counſels of Fleſh and Blood, and not leaning upon carnal Confidences, we ſhall endeavour to depend upon the Lord, to walk by the Rule of his Word, and to hearken to his Voice by his Servants.*

Now, theſe Things are our Duty whether we come under this Oath or not ; being moral Duties they are of perpetual Obligation, as we have ſhewn you already : And that theſe are moral Duties is evident and plain ; for, to ſtrengthen one another's Hands, in promoting the Honour of God, and the Good of his Cauſe and People, is a Duty binding

upon us, both by the first and second Tables of the moral Law; and that we should depend upon the Lord alone, chiefly aim at his Glory, and the advancing and promoting of his Kingdom, and study to have a Conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ, is clear from the whole Bible, the Old and New Testament, where we are taught to trust in God alone, to love him with a superlative Love, to esteem him above all Things, and to subordinate all our Concerns to his Glory and Honour; and that, *denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present World*, Tit. ii. 12. *That we shall not give up ourselves to a detestable Indifferency or Neutrality in the Cause of God*, is what we are all bound to already, because we are under the Oath of God, as we have shewn you, whether we explicitly swear this solemn Bond or not. A great many, both Ministers and Professors, are at this Day giving up themselves to a detestable Indifferency and Neutrality in the Cause of God, and yet, in the mean Time, professing a great Concern and Zeal for the Glory of God: Whether their Ends be single or not, we leave it between God and their own Consciences, as they shall answer to him at the great Day of Accounts, when every secret Thing shall be brought to Light. But then,

4*thly*. As we have the Matter of this solemn Oath, and as we have the solemn Profession of our Faith in it, so we are to notice the Expression of our Faith and Dependence upon God's Covenant of Promise, in our Entring into this Covenant of of Duty, namely, *These Things we promise and engage to, in the Strength of the promised Grace of the* LORD OUR GOD: So that this solemn Duty is not at all to be performed by us in our own Strength,

but

but in the Strength of the Grace of the Lord our God, and in the Faith of God's Covenant of Promiſe. We deſire to believe in God through his Son Jeſus Chriſt, and to take him with us in every Duty, and to go about this ſolemn Work in a Dependence upon that Grace that is in Chriſt Jeſus, who is full of Grace and Truth, and who has a Fulneſs of Grace, ſuitable Grace, ſeaſonable Grace, Grace to help us in every Time of Need. We promiſe nothing in our own Srrength, but in the Strength of the Grace that is in him for us: It is in the Strength of that Grace that is in the Promiſe, and is in the Covenant of Promiſe, that we are to proceed in this Work; and we are called and warranted to believe that he will be forthcoming to us in making our Vows, and in performing the ſame.

The laſt Thing we took notice of in the Bond was the Concluſion of it, in theſe Words. *In all which, profeſſing our own Weakneſs, we earneſtly pray to God, who is the Father of Mercies, through his Son Jeſus Chriſt, to be merciful unto us, and to enable us, by the Power of his holy Spirit, that we may do our Duty, unto the Praiſe of his Grace in the Churches.* Amen.

This Concluſion is a Prayer which every one of us have need to be putting up to God. We are called to pray without ceaſing; to pray with all Supplication in the Spirit; to pray to God as our God and Father in Chriſt's Right; to pray in Faith, which eyes God in Chriſt; to put up the Prayer of Faith for his Mercy, that he would be merciful to us. O! Nothing will do us Good but his Mercy. *O! Satisfy us early with thy Mercy.* Nothing will carry us through but his Mercy. The Covenant of Grace is the ſure Mercies of *David.*

vid. We are then to look to him for Mercy, for pardoning Mercy, for ſtrengthning Mercy, for ſupporting Mercy, and for through-bearing Mercy. We are to pray in the Spirit for Mercy. The Holy Spirit is in the Church thus to enable us to perform Duty; we are then to walk in the Spirit, to believe in the Holy Ghoſt, and to depend on the Spirit, that by him we may be enabled to perform our Duty, to the Praiſe of his Grace in the Churches. *Amen.*

So much for the ſecond Thing on this *third* Head, which was to conſider the Matter of the Oath and Bond under Conſideration. Before we proceed to ſpeak of the Manner in which we ought to enter into this Bond, let us conſider,

That, as it is long ſince it was propheſied by *Jacob*, *That the Sceptre ſhould not depart from* Judah, *nor a Lawgiver from between his Feet, till* Shiloh *came, and to him ſhould the Gathering of the People be;* ſo this Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts ſuppoſes a Coming to the Lord of Hoſts; a Gathering to him by Faith. He is the Enſign ſet up to the Nations; *To him ſhall the* Gentiles *ſeek*, and his Reſt is and ſhall be glorious. O they have a good Standing, who have, by Grace, been enabled to take up their Standing, for Eternity, under the Banner of the Captain of Salvation! Their Standing is ſo ſure that it will never be altered, and the Glory of the Grace of God is ſo much ſeen in the Gathering to *Shiloh*, that it is for the Glory of God, that they who are gathered to him by Grace, ſwear to him in a Covenant of Duty and Gratitude: And ſo there is a Command iſſued out from Heaven, *Pſalm* lxxvi. 11. *Vow and pay unto the Lord your God: Let all that be round about him bring Preſents unto him that ought to be feared.* Vowing to the Lord, then, is a Duty that

that we are called unto, that we may renew our baptiſmal Vows and Engagements. But perhaps ſome of you hear theſe Things with very little Concern; you think you have little to do with this Work; you think all this little or nothing to the Purpoſe: But, tell me, was it little to the Purpoſe, or nothing to the Purpoſe, that you was baptized? I tell you, if you make not Conſcience of renewing your baptiſmal Vows, you give up with your Baptiſm; in ſhort, you give up with the Retinue of the Lamb on the Mount *Zion*, and practically turn aſide to the Retinue of his Enemies. *Vow and pay unto the Lord your God: Let all that be round about him bring Preſents to him that ought to be feared.* All that be round about him, *that is*, all the Goſpel Church, all that hear this Goſpel: As all *Iſrael* were encamped round about the Ark, ſo is the Church, who by Profeſſion ſurround Chriſt the New Teſtament Ark, they are his Retinue and Followers. What Way ſhall you prove that you are true Men? When *Joſeph* would try his Brethren, they ſay, We be true Men. How would you make it appear that you are true Men? Why? You muſt *bring Preſents to him that ought to be feared.* Juſt bring yourſelves to him: *Vow to the Lord your God, and pay.* O! It is a very awful Work to vow and ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts: But you ſee the very Argument is, *he ought to be feared;* he ought to be had in Reverence by all that be round about him. We loſe the Benefit of the Word we read, and of the Goſpel we hear preached, two Ways; *firſt*, We are ready to forget that God is the Speaker; *2dly*. We are ready to forget that we are the Perſons ſpoken to: But when we hear the Word read and ſpoken to, we ſhould endeavour to keep theſe two in Mind, *namely*, that

that God is the Speaker, and that he is ſpeaking to us in particular. And here you have a Duty enjoined and commanded, and we are the very Perſons called to it, namely, *Vow and pay to the Lord your God:* And yet, I ſuppoſe, many will be putting it away from themſelves; they will perhaps think it is the Duty of ſome to vow and ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts, but not their Duty. But we tell you, it is your Duty, whether you will believe it or not. There are ſome Things Duty immediately, and ſome mediately. There is a Duty, that, in the Order of Nature, goes before vowing and ſwearing to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty. What is that? Why? It is the Duty of Believing in the Name of the Son of God, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. It is our own Fault we have not all believed in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt already; and therefore it is the immediate Duty of all who have not yet believed, now to believe, and, believing in the Lord, to ſwear to the Lord: It is the immediate Duty of all who have believed in the Name of the Son of God, to ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts; and it is the Duty of all ſuch as have not yet believed, to believe immediately, and without any farther Delay: We therefore call you immediately to believe in the Name of the Son of God; and mind we deal with your Conſciences, we deal with immortal Souls, with a View to our Appearance before the awful Tribunal of God, where you muſt give an Account how you have received the Word, as we muſt alſo account for it how we have delivered the ſame unto you.

We now proceed, by the Lord's Aſſiſtance, to the *third* Thing on this Head, *namely*, To ſhew how and after what Manner we are to enter into this Bond and ſolemn Engagement. After what Manner

Manner ſhall we then approach to the Lord in this awful and ſolemn Work, of Vowing and Swearing to him?

1. Then, we are to ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts believingly, and in Faith, for without Faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God. We muſt have the Faith of the Command of God, that we have his Command for this Piece of ſolemn religious Worſhip, as we have formerly ſhewn you from the Practice of the Church in Old Teſtament Times, as in the Time of *Nehemiah*, *Aſa*, and *Joſiah*, when they did ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts. This was the Practice of the Church, *Pſalm* cxix. 106. *I have ſworn, and I will perform, that I will keep thy righteous Judgments.* You have an expreſs Command for it, *Pſalm* lxxvi. 11. *Vow to the Lord your God, and pay.* And this was alſo the Practice of the *Macedonians; They gave their ownſelves to the Lord.* You are to have Faith, as in the Precept, ſo in the Promiſe of God; and this you have in the Words of the Text, where it is promiſed, *In that Day ſhall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts:* As alſo in the 21ſt Verſe of the Chapter, *And the Lord ſhall be known to* Egypt, *and the* Egyptians *ſhall know the Lord in that Day; and they ſhall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it.* Here is Furniture for vowing and paying of Vows, *They ſhall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it.* We muſt act Faith upon the Covenant of Promiſe, and upon the Lord Jeſus Chriſt as the Altar of Acceptance; for we muſt bring all our Preſents to this Altar. As there was no other Altar of old, where the Lord's People were to worſhip, but at *Jeruſalem*, ſo here there is no other Altar but Chriſt, where we can be accepted as to our Perſons and Services, and to which we are to bring all our Offerings. *Iſa.* lvi. 7. *Their Sacrifices and Burnt-Offerings ſhall be accepted*

upon

upon mine Altar. This is the Altar that ſanctifies the Gifts ; *For he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*

But then, 2*dly*. as we are to ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts believingly, and in Faith, ſo we are to do it with due Deliberation, and in Judgment ; *Jer*. iv. 2. *And thou ſhalt ſwear, the Lord liveth, in Truth, in Judgment, and in Rigthteouſneſs, and the Nations ſhall bleſs themſelves in him, and in him ſhall they glory. Thou ſhalt ſwear, the Lord liveth, in Truth ;* that is, we are to conſider, and be aſſured that what we ſwear be Truth : It is to be in Righteouſneſs, that is, we are to be faithful and righteous in paying our Vows, and not to deal with a ſlack Hand with the Lord : It is alſo to be in Judgment, that is, with Knowledge and Underſtanding of what we ſwear, according to our different Capacities and Abilities to know Matters : But it is not to be thought that every one has the ſame Judgment and Capacity ; you may take Notice for this, *Neh*. x. 28. *And the reſt of the the People, the Prieſts, the* Levites, *the Porters, the Singers, the Nethinims, and all they that had ſeparated themſelves from the People of the Land, unto the Law of God, their Wives, their Sons and their Daughters, every one having Knowledge and Underſtanding.* Verſe 29. *They clave unto their Brethren, and entred into a Curſe, and into an Oath, to walk in God's Law which was given by* Moſes *the Servant of God.* There you may obſerve that there were People of very different Capacities entred into this Oath. It is ſaid, *Every one having Knowledge and having Underſtanding*, that is, they had a competent Meaſure of Knowledge and Underſtanding, tho' they had not all the ſame Meaſure of Knowledge ; for we may obſerve here, that not only thoſe who were Prieſts and *Levites* joined in the Work, but likeways the reſt of the People, every one that had ſeparated themſelves from

from the People of the Lands, all that saw it to be their Duty to turn to the Lord, their Wives, their Sons, and their Daughters: As there was such a mixed Multitude of People, in different Stations, joining in that Work, it is not to be thought they had all alike Knowledge and Understanding of the Law of God, either of the moral or ceremonial Law; but such as joined in that Work, were such as had some Knowledge of their Duty, and desired to know it, and did ly open to Light, and to receive Instruction in what was dark unto them. We say, it is to be with Judgment, that is, with what Judgment the Lord has given to us to understand this Matter.

But then, as it is to be done in Judgment, so, *3dly.* we are to swear to the Lord of Hosts reverently; every Duty ought to be performed with holy Awe and Reverence, and so surely this among the rest; that is one of the great Causes of the Lord's Wrath and heavy Indignation at this Day, that we have lost realizing Vows of God, as he hath manifested himself in *Immanuel*, God with us: Let us have Grace in our Hearts that we may serve him with Reverence and godly Fear: This Reverence, this godly Fear, must just be with Grace in our Hearts; we have not one right Thought of God in our Hearts by Nature; nothing but Unbelief there: It is by Faith we attain sanctifying Thoughts of God, enabling us to sanctify the Lord God of Hosts in our Hearts, and to make him our Fear, and to make him our Dread. As we are to perform every Duty with holy Reverence of God, so, in a particular Manner, this great and infinite Name of *Jehovah* our God. When *Jacob* made a Covenant with *Laban*, he swore by the Fear of his Father *Isaac*, that is, by the God of his Father *Isaac*, who feared and adored the true God.

But then, 4*thly*, we are to swear to the Lord of Hosts sincerely, *Psalm* lxvi. 18. *If I regard Iniquity in my Heart, the Lord will not hear me.* You see what was the Sin the Lord condemns in *Israel* of old, *Psalm* lxxviii. 36, 37. *Nevertheless, they did flatter him with their Mouth, and they lied to him with their Tongues, for their Heart was not right with him, neither were they stedfast in his Covenant.* We must then be concerned to have the Heart made right, and for this End must put it in his Hand to make it right; for he saith, *A new Heart also will I give unto you, and a new Spirit will I put within you; I will take away the Heart of Stone, and will give you an Heart of Flesh: Behold, I make all Things new!* If we come to that Duty regarding any Sin in our Hearts, we may be assured the Lord will not hear us. If the infinite *Jehovah* observe that any Thing ly nearer our Hearts than himself and his Glory, then he will despise all our Vows and Engagements; we are then, I say, to put the Heart in his Hand to make it right for himself: This was the Prayer of the Psalmist, *Make my Heart sound in thy Statutes, that I be not ashamed.* He makes our Hearts sound as to their Principle, and the main End, tho' there are and will be Corruptions with us so long as we are here away. Again,

5*thly*. We are to swear to the Lord of Hosts singly, making his Glory our main End and Aim. O! if we come with By-Ends to this Work, we will draw Wrath down upon the Congregation of *Israel*—*When you fasted in the fifth and seventh Month, did you fast at all to me?* saith the Lord concerning *Israel*. Self was the reigning Principle with them; they did not fast so much for the Cause of their Captivity, as for the Captivity itself. O what Fasting to the Lord have we? How much Self? How little Singleness

Singleneſs is with us in all we do? But we have need to take heed to our End, if it be with a View to his Glory. If we come with any By-Ends, ſuch as, that we may be Neighbour-like, the Lord will obſerve and remark that Man by himſelf, and fearful will his Judgment be. We have to do with the Searcher of Hearts, who underſtands Heart-Secrets, and who tries the Reins of the Children of Men.

But then, *6thly.* as to the Manner of our Vowing and Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts, it is to be done cheerfully. *All* Judah (it is ſaid) *rejoiced at the Oath*, in *Aſa*'s Time; as God loveth a cheerful Giver, ſo he loveth a cheerful Covenanter. We are to do it with Heart and Hand, willingly and thankfully that ever he made a Covenant with his Choſen, and that the Covenant made with him alſo ſtands faſt with him; that ever he enabled us to take hold of that Covenant made with his Choſen, and that he inclined our Hearts, in the Faith of his Covenant, to devote ourſelves to him in a Covenant of Duty. *All* Judah *rejoiced at the Oath, for they had ſworn with all their Hearts, and ſought him with their whole Deſire, and he was found of them*, 2 Chron. xv. 15.

7thly. We are to vow and ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts timeouſly, not to put off this moral Duty by pretended Shifts or Delays. Sometimes Weakneſs ſtands in the Way of a Perſon's going on to their Duty; ſometimes the Enemy's Temptations ſtand in the Way, ſometimes a Spirit of Lukewarmneſs in the Cauſe of Chriſt, and ſometimes the Prevalency of Unbelief and indwelling Sin ſtrikes out againſt theſe ſacred and holy Bonds, objecting againſt this as againſt other Duties: Many have this and the other Objection; whereas, if the Truth of the Matter were heard, ſome of theſe Evils, juſt now mentioned,

tioned, would be found, at the Bottom, even with ſome who have the Root of the Matter in them: But we are to go about this Duty timeouſly; the the Lord diſcerns all our Thoughts, whether our Objections be really Matter of Concern to us, or if they be only a Shift that we may delay our Duty for the preſent: If ſo it be with any of us, our Duty may be long, yea, perhaps, for ever hid from us. He will reſent ſuch a Quarrel. It is not indeed to be done raſhly, but deliberately, but yet it is not to be delayed upon any trifling Excuſe; People are to beware of unneceſſary Shifts in preſent Duty, to beware of what may ſtand in the Way as Obſtructions, hindring their paying publick Homage to the God of *Iſrael*. We are To-day to hear his Voice, for it is To-day his Command runs; we have no To-morrows given us at all in Matters of preſent Duty; but *To-day*, ſaith the Holy Ghoſt, *if you will hear his Voice*. If this Opportunity be loſt, we may never ſee another. We have now, by the kind Providence of God, an Opportunity which many of the Lord's People now in Glory prayed for, wreſtled for, would have been glad to have ſeen, and died in the Faith of: Let us then tho' under many Diſcouragements, bleſs the Lord for what he hath directed to in this Matter. O, then, be exhorted to ſet about perſonal Covenanting, in order to publick Covenanting. I tell every one of you that are baptized, you are bound to this: Will you then make light of your baptiſmal Vows and Engagements? *I will pour Water on him that is thirſty, and Floods upon the dry Ground*, ſaith the Lord. We ſummon every one here to believe the Promiſe this Night. It looks to every one of you, for you are either the thirſty, or the dry Ground; *I will pour Water on the thirſty, and Floods upon the dry*

dry Ground: Not only upon the thirſty Ground, that has ſome Greenneſs upon it; but even the wild Out-Field, that is juſt uſeleſs, is included in the Promiſe. *I will pour Floods upon the dry Ground.* O look for his Coming in the Promiſe of the Spirit. You was baptiſed in the Name of the Holy Ghoſt, and he is the Spirit of Grace and Supplication, which he has ſaid he will pour upon the Houſe of *David*, and on the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem*. You may look for his Coming down as the Rain upon the Graſs, and upon his Coming you ſhall be made to mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only Son, or for a Firſt-born.

So much for a Hint at the Manner in which we are to vow and ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts.

We proceed to the *fourth* Head in the Method, namely, to ſhew that the Lord's People, eſſaying to vow and ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts, may warrantably truſt a promiſing God, that he will enable them to perform this Duty to the Praiſe of his Grace.

O! if we are helped ſingly to truſt him, this will be the only Way to praiſe him; we have good Reaſon to truſt him, and diſtruſt ourſelves; let us then come confidently to the Work, with an Eye of Faith to him, putting all our Truſt in him: We have good Warrant ſo to do, if we conſider, in the *1ſt* Place, that we have his Command to this Duty, *Pſalm* lxxvi. 11. *Vow and pay unto the Lord your God: Let all that be round about him bring Preſents unto him that ought to be feared.* We may truſt him, then; he puts no Work in our Hand, but what he will give Strength to perform to the Praiſe of his Grace. He has taught us to pray, *Our Father which art in Heaven, thy Kingdom come:* And will not he enable us to ſay, *Hoſannah to the Son*

of

of David! Bleſſed be the King that cometh in the Name of the Lord.

2. We may truſt that he will enable us to perform this Duty to the Praiſe of his Grace, becauſe we are called to truſt in him at all Times, and therefore at this Time, and in this Duty: We ought to truſt him in the Work of ſhewing forth his Death, the beſt Work ever was put in our Hands, to be performed by us in his Strength; and we may truſt him alſo in a Time of renewing our ſolemn Engagements unto him, *Pſalm* xxvi. 8. *Truſt in him at all Times; ye People, pour out your Hearts before him: God is a Refuge for us. Selah.* He is a Refuge for Strength to perform all our Duties, and a Refuge for Safety in all our Difficulties.

3. We have good Warrant to truſt a promiſing God, that he will enable us to perform this Duty to the Praiſe of his Grace, becauſe it is a Duty wherein he is glorified: It is for his Glory: And will he not help us to do what is for his Glory? And has he left us alone to lift up the Burden of his Praiſe? No, he will not; for, in the new Covenant, he has taken the Burden on himſelf, and has promiſed to make his Grace ſufficient for us, and to perfect his Strength in our Weakneſs. God is glorified by confeſſing that Truth, that *Chriſt is Lord, Philip.* ii. 11. and that *every Tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father:* And he has ſaid, that *all Nations whom thou haſt made ſhall come and worſhip before thee, O Lord, and ſhall glorify thy Name; for thou art great and doſt wondrous Things: Thou art God alone,* Pſalm lxxxvi. 9, 10. *Chriſt made himſelf of no Reputation, and took upon him the Form of a Servant, was found in Faſhion as a Man, humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto Death; there-*

fore

fore God hath also highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name, that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow; of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth; and that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father, Phil. ii. 7, 8, 9, 10. So God the Father will have no Glory in the Church at all, if it is not in a Way of confessing that Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.

4*thly*. We may trust him, that he will enable us to perform this Duty to the Praise of his Grace, upon this Ground, *namely*, the Ground of his own Promise. Would we have any better Security than this in the Text, *In that Day shall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *speak the Language of* Canaan, *and shall swear to the Lord of Hosts*. They shall have a new Dialect among them, and they shall swear to the Lord of Hosts. This is a Promise that looks to us, and we are warranted to plead it. When a Man speaks, he speaks but to one particular Person, or but to a few; but when God speaks, he speaks to every one; *In that Day shall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *swear unto the Lord of Hosts*. This is spoken of New Testament Times, and concerning dark Times; for it is said, *In that Day shall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *swear to the Lord of Hosts* There shall be some here, and some there, tho' but a few in respect of the Bulk of the Land; STATES-MEN and KIRK-MEN shall hold on their Back-sliding Way, but a few, *five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *shall swear to the Lord of Hosts*. To whom is the Word spoken? Why? It is to *Egypt*, and to us, who, in respect of Darkness and spiritual Bondage, are like unto the *Egyptians*. *Five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *shall swear to the Lord of Hosts*. The Promise

Promiſe is to us, and the Promiſer is the Lord of Hoſts; the Word of Promiſe then muſt be ſure, when it is ſpoken by the Lord of Hoſts, *Jehovah Tzebaoth*. And you have the Promiſe, not only in the Text, but alſo in the Context, *Verſe* 21. *And the Lord ſhall be known to* Egypt, *and the* Egyptians *ſhall know the Lord in that Day, and ſhall do Sacrifice and Oblation; yea, they ſhall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it.* Why? Here is Knowledge by which we may vow and ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts. *The* Egyptians *ſhall know the Lord in that Day.* We are to ſwear in *Knowledge* and in *Judgment*. Here it is! *The* Egyptians *ſhall know the Lord in that Day; yea, they ſhall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it.* I aſſure you, tho' we had all the Knowledge upon Earth, if we want ſupernatural Knowledge, *that is*, Knowledge by God's teaching, we will never perform this Duty aright: But he hath ſaid it, *They ſhall know the Lord in that Day;* they ſhall know the Object of their Worſhip, and they ſhall ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts. Conſider, the very Manner of performing this Duty is taken in the Promiſe; for it is ſaid, *They ſhall know the the Lord, and they ſhall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it;* that is, they ſhall vow and ſwear in Faith, and in a Dependence on *Immanuel*, in Obedience to his Command, in the Faith of his Promiſe, and with ſome Meaſure of Singleneſs in Aim and End. *They ſhall ſwear unto the Lord of Hoſts.*

5*thly*. We have good Warrant to truſt a promiſing God, that he will enable us to perform this Duty to the Praiſe of his Grace, if we conſider what a faithful God hath ſaid to his eternal Son: We have his Word, for our Through-bearing, to his eternal Son, *Iſa.* xlix. 3. *Thou art my Servant, O* Iſrael, *in whom I will be glorified.* We may juſt grip to that Word

Word, which he has ſaid to Chriſt; *And ſaid unto me, Thou art my Servant, O* Iſrael, *in whom I will be glorified.* God will be glorified in Chriſt, and therefore we may juſt put in, that we may be helped to glorify God through Chriſt, and in Chriſt to be enabled to do every Work he calls to, to his Praiſe: And is not this a Work to his Praiſe? We may then put our Part of the Work in Chriſt's Hand, and then we ſhall be enabled to do it to the Praiſe of God's Grace, for Chriſt is his Servant in whom he will be glorified.

6thly. We may truſt that we ſhall be enabled to perform this Duty to the Praiſe of his Grace, when we have not only God's Word and Promiſe to his eternal Son, but alſo Chriſt's Word for it to us, *John* xv. 4, 5. *Abide in me, and I in you——for without me ye can do nothing.* This is the Word which he is ſpeaking to all the Worſhippers coming up to the Mount, at this Time, *Abide in me, and I in you:* Abide in me by Faith, and I in you by my Spirit: *I am the Vine, ye are the Branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much Fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. Abide in me, for without me ye can do nothing.* He is willing and ready to be employed in every Duty; to be employed for Aſſiſtance, *without me ye can do nothing*; to be employed for Acceptance, *for he is girded about the Paps with a golden Girdle*, juſt that we may hold him by the ſame for Acceptance, when we come with all our Offerings. *Abide in me, and I in you, for without me ye can do nothing*; you can do nothing to the glorifying of God without me; it is not the Will of God that you do any Thing without me; I am juſt with you in all your Work. If you go to Family-Faſting, to perſonal and ſecret, or to publick Faſting, or whatever Duty you go to, take me

ay with you; I am juſt able and willing to be with you, and to be employed by you at every Turn, for without me ye can do nothing.

7*thly*. We have good Warrant to truſt a promiſing God, that he will enable us to perform this Duty to the Praiſe of his Grace. Why? Becauſe our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is the Head of the worſhipping Aſſembly in the upper and lower Houſe, and no Worſhip can be managed without him. Innocent Angels approach God in their own Perſons, as did *Adam* in his Innocence; but now, by the Spirit, through the Son, we have Acceſs to the Father. The Spirit is in the Church, to bring us to God in the Name of Chriſt: Therefore it is ſaid by the Apoſtle *Peter*, in his firſt Epiſtle, 2d *Chapter* and 9th *Verſe*, *Ye are a choſen Generation, a royal Prieſthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People; that ye ſhould ſhew forth the Praiſe of him who hath called you out of Darkneſs into his marvellous Light*. You are a holy Nation, under the Head of the holy Nation. And what is to be your Work? Why? It is *to ſhew forth the Praiſes of him who hath called you out of Darkneſs into his marvellous Light*. And, among the Ways to ſhew forth his Praiſe, theſe are none of the leaſt, *namely*, Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts, and ſhewing forth his Death till he come again; both of which we have a very near Proſpect of, and it will be your own Fault if you do not ſee him by Faith, in both theſe Ordinances, who is the Head of the worſhipping Aſſembly, both in the upper and lower Houſe. But then,

In the *laſt* Place, upon this Head, we have good Ground to truſt a promiſing God, that he will enable us to perform this Duty of Vowing and Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts, to the Praiſe of his Grace. Why? Becauſe this is the Method he

uſes

uſes in ſettling and eſtabliſhing the Order of the Lord's Houſe, *namely*, to bind his Servants and People by an Oath of Allegiance to the King of *Zion*, to be loyal Subjects to him, and to obſerve and keep pure and intire all his Inſtitutions, and the Order of his Houſe: And we may truſt him with all the Work, *Zech.* vi. 12, 13. *Thus ſpeaketh the Lord of Hoſts, ſaying, Behold the Man whoſe Name is the* BRANCH, *and he ſhall grow up out of his Place, and he ſhall build the Temple of the Lord, even he ſhall build the Temple of the Lord, and he ſhall bear the Glory, and ſhall ſit and rule upon his Throne, and he ſhall be a Prieſt upon his Throne.* There has been great Treachery and breaking of Vows made to him, and therefore there is a Call to us to ſwear Allegiance to him: And we may go on to this Work in the Strength of the Lord, making Mention of his Righteouſneſs, even of his only. So much for the *fourth* Thing in the Method, which was to ſhew that the Lord's People, in eſſaying to vow and ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts, may warrantably truſt a promiſing God, that he will enable them to perform this Duty to the Praiſe of his Grace.

We come now, in the *fifth* and *laſt* Place to apply the Doctrine. And, in the *1ſt* Place, it may be applied in an Uſe of Examination and Trial.

Is it ſo then, as has been ſaid, that as it is the Duty of the Church and People of God, in New Teſtament Times, to renew their national Vows and Covenants, tho' they be the ſmaller Number, compared with the Oppoſers of Reformation, ſo they may warrantably truſt a promiſing God, that he will enable them to perform that Duty to the Praiſe of his Grace?

Then

Then it calls us, upon this Occasion, to examine ourselves: As we have great and solemn Work in View, the Work of shewing forth the Lord's Death till he come again, and the solemn Work of vowing and swearing to the Lord of Hosts, it is certainly necessary that we examine ourselves: For as it is said by our Lord, *Let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup;* so it is his Will and Command that we examine ourselves in order to solemn vowing Work: Let a Man examine himself, and so let him vow, and so let him swear to the Lord of Hosts: For tho' the Duties of shewing forth the Lord's Death, and swearing to the Lord of Hosts, be Duties all of us are bound unto, yet it is not the immediate Duty of any, in a natural State, either to approach the Lord's Table, or to swear to the Lord of Hosts; but it is the first and immediate Duty of every one out of Christ, to come to him by Faith, and then to approach his Table, and join in vowing to *Jacob*'s mighty God: But as to all those who are Believers in Christ, it is not only their Duty, but their immediate Duty, to go up to the Mount of Ordinances, and shew forth his Death till he come, and to join in vowing Work when there is a present Call to it in this Congregation; therefore it is our Duty to examine ourselves: For tho' many of you have received Tokens of Admission to the Lord's Table, we know not the Hearts of Men, we know not your State, and therefore the Work of Examination and Trial, it comes all home to your own Door: *Let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Brend, and drink of that Cup.* O look to him, that he may be with you in your secret Self-Examination, and look to him that he may be with you in his own Word. When we are called to lay before you the Marks and Characters of those who ought

ought to be employed in the ſolemn Work in View, who are they, then, who are called to approach the Table of the Lord, and to join in ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts, and by joining in this ſolemn Work of renewing our Covenant-Engagements to to the Lord? We would have you to try it under the Influence of the Holy Spirit. And, in the *firſt* Place, we enquire at you, Are you the Children of *Zion*, who ought to be joyful in their King? Are you the Children of *Zion*, who have a Call to this as their immediate Duty, to vow and pay to the Lord their God, to ſwear Allegiance to *Zion*'s King? It is the Children of *Zion*, the native Inhabitants of *Zion*, who are in ſome Meaſure fitted, through Grace, to ſwear to *Zion*'s King, who is the Governor among the Nations. Were you born in *Zion?* Were you born of the Spirit? Has there been a Principle of ſpiritual Life wrought in you by the Spirit in Regeneration? Try the Matter; where there is ſpiritual Life there is ſpiritual Senſations. Has your Soul been made to breathe after Chriſt and Fellowſhip with him, *till the Day break, and the Shadows fly away? My Soul thirſteth for thee, my Fleſh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirſty Land where no Water is: My Soul thirſteth for God, for the living God: When ſhall I come and appear before God?* Pſalm xlii. 2. *My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the Courts of the Lord; my Heart and Fleſh crieth out for the living God,* Pſalm lxxxiv. 2. Try it. Are you groaning in this Tabernacle, being burdened, burdened with a Load of indwelling Sin? Are you feeling your Burden of Guilt, and of your ſpiritual Wants and Plagues? Try it by your ſpiritual Conflict with indwelling Sin, and all your ſpiritual Enemies. Is this your Language, *O wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the Body*

Body of this Death! Return, return, O Shulamite! *What will you see in the* Shulamite, *but as it were the Company of two Armies?* Again, try it by your spiritual Appetite after the hidden Manna, after Christ himself. Do you feed upon Christ the hidden Manna in the Word of Grace? Is the Desire of your Soul to him, and the Remembrance of his Name? Do you remember his Love more than Wine? Try it. Again, Have you common Interest and Concerns with him? Do the Reproaches of them who reproach him fall upon you? Are you grieved when he is dishonoured, and do you rejoice when he is honoured? Is there nothing so much the Desire of your Soul, as that *David*'s Horn may bud forth pleasantly in the Work of God's Grace within thee, and in the Advancement of his declarative Glory in the Land, and every where, and that the Crown may flourish upon his Head.

2*dly*. Examine yourselves. Have you attained to any Thing of a supernatural Knowledge of Christ, and have you got some heavenly Acquaintance with Christ, as you have it propheſied concerning the *Egyptians* in the 21 Verse of this Chapter, *The Lord shall be known to* Egypt, *and the* Egyptians *shall know the Lord in that Day, and they shall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it*. You see this Vowing to the Lord flows, in its Nature and Order, from a saving Knowledge of the Lord. *The* Egyptians *shall know the Lord——— and they shall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it*. Have you seen the King in his Beauty? Is your Knowledge of God the Fruit and Effect of God's Teaching you by his Word and Spirit? And is it of that Kind and Nature that the Glory of God is manifested to you in the Person of Christ, revealed to you by the Spirit in the Word of Grace? 2 *Cor*. iv. 6. Have you got such a Know-

a Knowledge of him, as that you esteem him above all Things? *Psalm* lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.* Have you got such a Knowledge of him, as has made you sell all Things to buy the Pearl of great Price, the Treasure hid in the Gospel-Field? Such a Knowledge of him as has humbled thee, and made thee to abhor thyself, and repent in Dust and Ashes? *Job* xlii. 5. *Isa.* vi. 6. Such a Knowledge of him as makes thee place thy chief Happiness in him, in the Blinks of his Countenance, and to desire no other Heaven for Eternity, but to be where he is, to behold his Glory? And does not this reconcile thee to ly down in the Grave, in a little, that when you awake you shall be satisfied with his Likeness, and behold his Face in Righteousness? Have you got such a Knowledge of him, as that you have seen the Glory of all the Perfections of God centring in him, Mercy and Truth meeting in him, Righteousness and Peace kissing each other in him? Have you got such a Knowledge of him, and Acquaintance with him, as makes you prize his Presence above all Things? *Tell me, O thou whom my Soul loveth, where thou feedest, and where thou makest thy Flock to rest at Noon?* Have you got such a Knowledge of him, as makes you breathe after Conformity and Likeness to him? *O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes!* Do you love the Lord because he is holy? Do you, in some Measure, when you are at yourself, rejoice at the Remembrance of his Holiness? Have you got such a Knowledge of him, as has made you take up your Standing for Eternity upon the Person of Christ, and his everlasting Righteousness, saying. *Behold, O God our Shield, and look upon the Face of thine Anointed,* Psalm lxxxiv. 9. Have you all your Confidence

Confidence fixed upon Chriſt alone, for Time and Eternity?

But then, *3dly.* as you have a View of bringing a Preſent to him that ought to be feared, in devoting yourſelves to the Lord in a Covenant of Duty, Have you been compaſſing the Goſpel-Altar with the Gift? Have you all your Confidence fixed upon Chriſt alone, for Acceptance of your Perſons and Performances, as in Verſe 19. *In that Day ſhall there be an Altar to the Lord in the Midſt of the Land of* Egypt? Are you Worſhippers at this Altar? And is Chriſt all in all to you for Righteouſneſs and Strength? Do you truſt to the Sacrifice of a crucified Chriſt, as a Sacrifice of ſweet-ſmelling Savour unto God, to perfume your Perſon, and this and every Duty and Performance? There is a perfuming Savour, an abundant and freſh Savour in this Sacrifice; *Eph.* v. 2. *Walk in Love, as Chriſt alſo hath loved us, and hath given himſelf for us; an Offering and a Sacrifice unto God, for a ſweet-ſmelling Savour.* This his Sacrifice has perfumed the four wide Corners of the Heaven of Heavens. There is an abundant Savour here to perfume all our Offerings, and it is as freſh as it was that Day when he bowed the Head and gave up the Ghoſt.

4thly. Are you among thoſe that are crying to the Lord becauſe of your Oppreſſors, as it is promiſed concerning *Egypt*, in the 20 Verſe, *They ſhall cry unto the Lord becauſe of their Oppreſſors, and he ſhall ſend them a Saviour and a great One, and he ſhall deliver them?* His People are a praying People, and they are ſenſible of the ſpiritual Oppreſſions they are under, and they ſend their Cry daily to Heaven becauſe of their ſpiritual Oppreſſors; they are oppreſſed with Temptations, Deſertions and indwelling Sin: And out of theſe Depths they cry unto the

the Lord most high, to God who performeth all Things for them: They keep a daily Correspendence and Communion with God, in Closet-Prayer, in Family-Prayer, and by ejaculatory Prayer. *In the Day when I cried, thou answeredst me, and strengthnedst me with Strength in my Soul*, Psalm cxxxviii. 3. *In the Morning will I direct my Prayer unto thee, and will look up*, Psalm v. 3. They not only pray, but seek and wait for Answer; *I will direct my Cry unto thee, and will look up*. As they are made to love him, so, through Grace, they are made to resolve to call upon him as long as they live.

5thly. Are you among those who are crying, *Hosanna* to the Son of *David*, to *Messiah* the Prince, the Saviour and great One, whom God has sent to deliver you, as in the 20 *Verse* of this *Chapter* where our Text lies? Have you been made to assent to God's Record concerning Christ, and to receive him as offered to you in the Gospel of Christ, and to say, *Blessed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord to save us? Save now, I beseech thee; send now Prosperity*. Is Christ, the Saviour whom God has sent to deliver you, indeed a great One in your View? Have you seen his infinite Holiness, Salvation and Loveliness? Is it thy Desire that he may be great to the Ends of the Earth? *He shall stand and feed in the Name of the Lord, in the Majesty of the Name of the Lord his God, and now shall he be great to the Ends of the Earth*. Have you seen the Need of him as a Saviour and a great One to deliver you? That none but the infinite One, the great One, could save you from your Sins? Have you seen such a Multitude of Sins in you, and such an infinite Evil in every Sin, that you can get no Rest but in him, and in that Salvation that he hath wrought? Are you receiving him by Faith, as sent of God to deliver you?

Are you living by Faith upon him, as your Saviour and Deliverer? Are you waiting for Redemption in *Jeruſalem*, waiting for the Time when you ſhall be perfected in Conformity and Likeneſs unto him? But then,

6thly. Has God put it in your Hearts, from Faith in, and Love to Chriſt, to put in your ſmall Mite to make his Name to be remembred to all Generations? And is it the earneſt and inward Deſire of your Heart, that the Lord may enable you, by his Grace, to glorify and honour Chriſt publickly and avowedly, in a Day when he it ſo publickly diſhonoured and diſowned by CHURCH and STATE? Are you going out to commanded Duty, juſt diſtruſting yourſelves, and truſting him with all the Work? Are you eſſaying to confeſs him before Men, hoping that he will be your Light and your Salvation, that he will work all the Work, and bear all the Glory? All thoſe that are his Diſciples are to own and confeſs him before Men, as in the 19th Verſe of this Chapter, *In that Day ſhall there be an Altar to the Lord in the Midſt of the Land of* Egypt, *and a Pillar at the Border thereof to the Lord.* Not only an Altar, Chriſt the Goſpel-Altar, but there ſhall be a Pillar to the Lord in the Border of the Land of *Egypt*; a Pillar inſcribed to the Lord of Hoſts, inſcribed to *Jehovah*. As they had formerly their Pillars inſcribed to their Idols and falſe Gods, ſo now there is a Pillar inſcribed to the Lord in the Border of the Land of *Egypt*. *In him ſhall all the Seed of* Iſrael *be juſtified, and ſhall glory.* Sin is come to ſuch a Height, that Men are boaſting of their Wickedneſs, boaſting in their Lewdneſs, boaſting in their Apoſtaſy from God's Truth and Cauſe, and in their oppoſing of the ſame; therefore there ought to be a Faith's Boldneſs, in borrowed Strength from Chriſt, in owning him and his Cauſe at this Day.

There

There shall be a Pillar at the Border thereof to the Lord.

7*thly*. Examine and try yourselves. Are you those that speak the Language of *Canaan?* Are you true Church-Members, and native Inhabitants of *Canaan*. It is only those who speak the Language of *Canaan*, that are fit to swear to the Lord of Hosts. The Connection is very remarkable in the Text, *In that Day shall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *speak the Language of* Canaan, *and swear to the Lord of Hosts*. This is one of the Dialects of *Canaan, They shall swear to the Lord of Hosts*. Try it then. Do you speak the Language of *Canaan?* Are you native Inhabitants of the Church of Christ? Have you a new Heart, a new Nature? *For out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh*. Are old Things past away, and all Things become new with you? Do you speak the Language of *Canaan*, the Language of Self-Distrust, and the Language of Faith on the Son of God? This is the Language of *Canaan*. The Men of the World they cannot understand it. When they hear the special Doctrines of Regeneration, and of Faith on the Son of God preached up, why, it is just all a strange Language to them. But is that thy Language, the Language of Faith's Trust in *Immanuel*, God with us? Do you speak the Language of *Canaan?* It is Scripture-Language, Scripture-Stile, that was the Language of *Canaan*. Is his Word to you most precious? Do you rejoice in his Word, as one that findeth great Spoil? Is it to you like pleasant Pastures, like Honey, and the Honey-Comb? Are you made to speak the Language of *Canaan* in secret Converse with God, when none but he sees you? *The Lord will command his Loving-Kindness in the Day-Time, and in the Night his Song shall be with me, and*

my

my Prayer unto the God of my Life, Pſalm xlii. 8. *O my Soul, thou haſt ſaid unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord: My Goodneſs extendeth not to thee*, Pſalm xvi. 2. Do you ſpeak the Language of *Canaan*, with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſalm* lxxiii. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I deſire beſides thee?* Verſe 26. *My Heart and my Fleſh faileth, but God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever?* And with the Church, *Lam.* iii. 24. *The Lord is my Portion, ſaith my Soul, therefore will I hope in him.* And with *Jacob*, Gen. xxviii. 21. *The Lord ſhall be my God, and this ſhall be the Houſe of God.* This was alſo *Jacob*'s Language at *Peniel*, when he wreſtled as a Prince, and had Power with God, *I will not let thee go till thou bleſs me.* It was the Language of *Moſes*, when he puts up that Prayer, *I beſeech thee ſhew me thy Glory.* It is alſo the Language of the Church, *Iſaiah* xlv. 24. *Surely, ſhall one ſay, in the Lord have I Righteouſneſs and Strength. This is the Name whereby he ſhall be called*, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Are you helped to ſpeak the Language of *Canaan* in your Converſe and Table-Talk? Do you ſpeak of Chriſt there? Do you ſpeak of him to your Children and Servants? Do you ſpeak of Chriſt in his Perſon, Love and Lovelineſs? Do you ſpeak of him as you riſe up and as you ly down, as you walk by the Way-Side, in your Converſe with Fellow-Chriſtians, and in your ſocial Meetings? *Come here, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my Soul.* There is a Telling what God hath done for our Soul, but this is to be done ſingly, prudently and humbly. Try it then. Do you ſpeak the Language of *Canaan* in your Converſe with one another, endeavouring that there may be ſomething of Chriſt in every Converſation? O how little is this the Caſe, when

when there is so much vain and idle Talking, even on the Lord's Day! But he hath said, *I will turn to the People of a pure Language, and they shall serve him with one Consent.*

We proceed, 2*dly*. to apply the Doctrine in an Use of Exhortation, particularly to you who are Strangers to Christ, and have never to this very Day taken hold of God's Covenant of Promise, and so are not fit to swear to him in a Covenant of Duty.

We come this Day to exhort you, from the Lord, to repent and believe the Gospel, for the Promise is to you and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call. The Promise is spoken to you, tho' you have never yet, by Faith, heard the heavenly and divine Voice of the infinite Speaker. The Promise is spoken to you, and left to you. And we would say to you, *Take heed, therefore, seeing there is a Promise left you of entring into his Rest, lest any of you seem to come short of it by Unbelief.* We are commissioned to publish the Record of God this Day: And this is the Record, That to you Man, to you Woman, *is born this Day, in the City of* David, *a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord:* That *to you a Child is born, to you a Son is given, whose Name is* WONDERFUL, *Counseller, the everlasting Father, the mighty God, and the Prince of Peace.* That God giveth to you *eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son:* That to you is *the Word of this Salvation sent*, to you who are lost and perishing Sinners of *Adam*'s Family. Christ is given to you for your Saviour; and, in the Lord's most holy Name, we make a full and free Offer of Christ to you, and to every one of you, as the Saviour of the World, as willing to save you from your Sins.

Thus

Thus saith the Lord, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the Land of* Egypt; *open thy Mouth wide, and I will fill it. I will sprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye shall be clean; and from all thy Filthiness, and from all thine Idols will I cleanse you. Come now let us reason together, saith the Lord: Tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; tho' they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wooll,* Isa. i. 18. John x. 16. *Other Sheep I have, which are not of this Fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my Voice; and there shall be one Fold and one Shepherd. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other Gods before me.* This is the great Charter of the Covenant laid before you, to be believed by you, that *God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself, not imputing to them their Trespasses.* And we are Ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's Stead, be ye reconciled to God; for *he hath made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.* In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we offer him to every Soul in all this Company, as the great God your Saviour, and we say to you, Make Haste, come down, Man, Woman, and receive him joyfully, for this Day is Salvation come to thine House; this Day is Salvation come to thy Soul, even the God of Salvation: For thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying unto you, *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy Transgressions for mine own Sake, and will not remember thy Sins,* Isa. xliii. 25. O! Why do you stand aback from Christ then? Is it because you are guilty Sinners? Then he publisheth his Indemnity to you; *I am he that blotteth out thy Transgressions for mine own Sake, and will not remember thy Sins.* Is it because you are not only guilty Sinners, but filthy and polluted? You have

just

juſt a Burden of Guilt and Filth binding you over to the Wrath of God. Thus ſpeaketh the Lord of Hoſts, ſaying, *Then will I ſprinkle clean Water upon you, and ye ſhall be clean; from all your Filthineſs and from all your Idols will I cleanſe you.* Why do you ſtand aback from Chriſt? Is it becauſe you have the old unrenewed Heart ſtanding in your Way? Thus ſpeaketh the Lord of Hoſts, ſaying, *A new Heart alſo will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you.* Are you objecting, you have a hard impenitent Heart, and cannot be affected with all your Sins, for as many as they are? Thus ſaith the Lord, *I will take away the ſtony Heart out of your Fleſh, and I will give you a Heart of Fleſh.* Are you objecting, His Law is a holy Law, and you have unholy Hearts, and, tho' you would mint at receiving Chriſt, you will never be able to walk in his Statutes, nor to keep his Judgments? Why, *Thus ſpeaketh the Lord of Hoſts, ſaying, I will put my Spirit within you, and cauſe you to walk in my Statutes, and ye ſhall keep my Judgments and do them.* Again, Are you objecting your Sins are not like the Sins of others, they are ſo great and ſo highly aggravated? *Thus ſaith the Lord, Tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, I will make them as white as Snow; tho' they be red like Crimſon, they ſhall be as Wool!* We are inviting you this Day to come and hear the Voice of the one Shepherd, in his Word of Grace. It is not merely and only the Voice of Man that ſpeaketh unto you, but theſe are the Words of the Shepherd of *Iſrael*, who ſaith, *I lay down my Life for the Sheep; and other Sheep I have, which are not of this Fold, them alſo I muſt bring, and they ſhall hear my Voice.* How does he bring them that are wandring upon the Mountains? Why, juſt by cauſing them to hear his Voice. *They ſhall hear my Voice. Hear*

and

and your Souls shall live. I will betrothe thee unto me for ever, yea, I will betrothe thee unto me in Righteousness and in Judgment, and in Loving-Kindness, and in Mercies. I will even betrothe thee unto me in Faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord. Thou shalt call me Ishi, *and shalt call me no more* Baali.

We shall, *3dly.* as the Lord assisteth, apply the Doctrine in a Word of Direction, to you who have it in View to come unto the Table of the Lord, and to approach the Lord in this solemn Work of Vowing and Swearing to the Lord of Hosts.

In the *first* Place, we would direct you to prepare for this solemn Work. The *Israelites* were to prepare for eating the Passover, and we are to prepare to eat this Gospel-Passover; for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. We are to prepare for every Duty, and more especially for such solemn Duties, as sitting down at the Table of the Lord, and swearing to the Lord of Hosts, swearing by the great Name of the Lord our God, swearing Allegiance to *Zion*'s King, that we will, through Grace, follow him fully, walk in all his Commandments, keep his Judgments and his Statutes, and hearken to his Voice. You are then to prepare,

In the *1st* Place, for such a solemn Duty as vowing to *Jacob*'s mighty God, by putting Preparation-Work, by Faith, in the Lord's Hand. *The Preparation of the Heart is from the Lord. Lord prepare our Hearts unto thee*, saith *David*. You must just put every Branch of our Preparation into his Hand, and cry with *David*, *Lord prepare our Hearts unto thee!* Act Faith on this, that he has promised to prepare the Heart himself; and take him with you in every Duty, for he saith, *Without me ye can do nothing.*

2dly. Pre-

2*dly*. Prepare by retiring alone, and setting apart some Time for secret Fasting and Humiliation. O! you are to profess, upon the insuing Occasion, to be a People humbled before the Lord, for the Breaches of God's Covenant, and for your own Sins as Breaches of it. Ought you not then to be humbled in secret? This is not a Work and Duty to be managed in a trifling Way and Manner. Set apart some Time, then, before the Approach of the Day for publick Humiliation, for secret Fasting and Humiliation before the Lord.

3*dly*. Prepare by considering the Matter of your Vow to the Lord, and by examining if the Lord has inclined your Heart to his Testimonies, and made you to love God as holy, and his Law as holy; and if he has inclined your Heart to breathe after Conformity with himself. If that be wrought in your Heart, you will just say *Amen* to all the Engagements you are called to come under to the Lord.

4*thly*. Prepare for publick Covenanting, and that by secret personal Covenanting: Let there be an essaying just between God and you, to take hold by Faith of God's Covenant of Promise, as your only Charter for the heavenly Inheritance, and then take hold by Faith also of his Righteousness, as the only Propitiation for your Sins; and particularly resolve against every Sin, and the Sin that does most easily beset you, calling, in the Grace and Strength of the Lord, to bring to Destruction every Lust and Corruption of thy Heart.

5*thly*. Prepare by much Closet-wrestling, in secret Prayer, with the blessed Angel of the Covenant, that his Presence may go with you, or that he may not carry you up hence. Wrestle with God for yourselves, for those of your Concerns, for the Fa-

 milies,

milies, Societies and Congregations whereof you are Members, for those who are to join with you in this solemn Work, and for the Land in general, and for our neighbouring Lands. You have great Work before you, and therefore we recommend *Jacob*'s Exercise to you; *he wept, and made Supplication unto him: He found him in* Bethel, *and there he spake with us.* And if you who are Servants cannot obtain Allowance of as much Time as is proper for such weighty Work, to be transacted between the Lord and you in secret, either hire some others to work for you, or redeem Time for this Purpose from your Night's Rest, and let none come slightly to this solemn Work; *for he will be sanctified in them that draw near to him, and before all the People he will be glorified:* And he communicates his Grace and Furniture for the solemn Work he calleth us unto, in these Means of his own Institution.

2*dly*. As we would direct you to prepare for this solemn Work, so we would direct you to be absolutely denied to your Preparation; for *cursed be the Man that trusteth in Man, and maketh Flesh his Arm*; but *blessed is the Man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose Hope the Lord is; he shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, that bringeth forth his Fruit in his Season; his Leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doth shall prosper.*

3*dly*. Let Faith be acted upon the holy Spirit of Promise. We are to believe in the *holy Ghost*: He is in the Gospel-Church to be believed upon; he was in it since ever the first Blast of the Gospel-Trumpet was sounded in Paradise, immediatly after the Fall. *Hag.* ii. 5. *My Spirit remaineth among you: to this Day; fear ye not.* And again, *Isa.* xliv. 3, 4, 5. *I will pour Water upon him that is thirsty, and Floods upon the dry Ground. I will pour my Spirit upon thy Seed, and my Blessing upon thine Offspring, and they shall*

hall spring up as among the Graſs, as Willows by the Water-Courſes : One ſhall ſay, I am the Lord's, &c. It only through him that this Duty can be managed to ny Purpoſe : And our Lord ſaith, *If I depart I will end him unto you.* He is in the Goſpel-Church, there-ore act Faith on him, as he has undertaken to con-ince the World of Sin, that he may give you a iew of your Sin, and of the Land's Sin. *When he come, he ſhall lorrify me,* ſaith Chriſt. O act Faith n him in his Perſon, and in his Office, as glorifying hriſt, and the Things of Chriſt, and ſhewing them nto you : Act Faith on him as your Teacher and emembrancer: *He ſhall teach you all Things, and bring ll Things to your Remembrance whatſoever I have ſaid nto you.* Act Faith on him as the Holy Goſt your anctifier ; as the Spirit of Grace that works and perates Grace in you ; as the Spirit of Humiliation, teach you to look on Chriſt whom you have peir-d, and to mourn for him. Act Faith on him as aving undertaken to apply the Purchaſe of Man's edemption and Salvation: Act Faith on him as *Je-vah* the divine Spirit, of whom Chriſt hath ſaid, *dwelleth with you, and ſhall be in you,* John xiv. 17.

4*thly.* Eſſay this great Work, depending on the ord Jeſus Chriſt for Righteouſneſs and Strength. *Palm* lxxi. 16. *I will go in the Strength of the Lord God: will make Mention of thy Righteouſneſs, even of thine y.* Song viii. 5. *Who is this that cometh up out of Wilderneſs, leaning upon her Beloved? I will ſtreng-n them in the Lord, and they ſhall walk up and down in Name, ſaith the Lord.* O come forward, juſt de-ding on him for Righteouſneſs and Strength, who ſaid, *In thy Righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted.* is will do, and carry us through this great Work, nothing elſe will do us any Good.

5*thly.*

5thly. In a Way of Direction, in the Strength of Christ, and the Grace that is in Christ, come foreward, and approach the Lord in that solemn Ordinance, both of vowing and swearing to the Lord, and shewing forth the Lord's Death till he come again. Come, I say, in the Exercise of Grace, and, *1st.* let Faith be in Exercise on the Promise of God, and the Person of Christ; come foreward looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of Faith: Looking to him in his Person, looking to him in his Ascension, as the Forerunner that has entred within the Vail. Let Faith be in Exercise, looking on and beholding the Glory of the Beloved. *The Word was made Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his Glory; the Glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth,* John i. 14. *And out of his Fulness have all we received, and Grace for Grace. Now,* Timothy, *my Son, be strong in the Grace that is in Christ Jesus.*

2dly. Let Repentance be in a lively Exercise in this solemn Approach. O! this is a fit Season for Gospel-Repentance, when we take a View of our own Sins, and the Sins of the present Generation, and of the former Generation, as you have them noticed in that Confession that is prefixed to the Bond and Engagement to Duty, which we are so solemnly to come under to the most high God. You see this was the Exercise of *Israel* and *Judah* in that 50th of *Jeremiah* and 4th Verse. *In those Days, and at that Time, saith the Lord, the Children of* Israel *shall come, they and the Children of* Judah *together, going and weeping; they shall go and seek the Lord their God. I will bring them, saith the Lord, with Weeping, and with Supplications will I lead them.* O what Need have we to mourn, if we take a Look of the great *Jehovah,* whose Name is dishonoured by our Sins

And you see there is Grace in the Promise to enable us to perform this Duty; *They shall come weeping as they go.* As we have sinned against the Lord God of our Fathers, so you see there is a Promise of Repentance; and not only is this a promised Grace, but it is commended by our Lord when performed, *Song* vii. 4. *Thine Eyes are like the Fish-Pools of* Heshbon, *by the Gate of* Bathrabbim.

3*dly*. We ought to come with Love in Exercise; the Love of Christ is to constrain us to this Duty. *The Love of Christ constraineth us*, saith the Apostle; *because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead*, We are to come with a superlative Love unto him that died for our Offences, and rose again for our Justification. What is the great Work we have in View, but to promise, in the Strength of the Grace of the Lord Jesus, to love him that died for us, and rose again, and, as an Evidence of our Love to him, to walk in his Ways, to keep his Statutes and Judgments, and hearken to his Voice.

4*thly*. Let us come in the Exercise of Gospel-Obedience, taking the Law out of the Hands of Christ the Mediator, saying, in his Strength, that we will keep his righteous Judgments: *I will keep thy Statutes*; *O forsake me not utterly*, Psalm cxix. 8.

5*thly*. Let holy Fear and Reverence be in Exercise, *Heb.* xii. 28. *Wherefore we, receiving a Kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have Grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with Reverence and godly Fear. I will put my Fear in their Heart, and they shall not depart from me*, Jer. xxxii. 40.

6*thly* and *lastly*, Approach the Lord in this solemn Ordinance, with the Staff of the Promise in

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the Hand of Faith; I say, just come forward to this holy Ground, with the Staff of the Promise in the Hand of Faith, for we will not keep our Feet at all here, if we want this Staff in the Hand of Faith. We have it then in the Text, *In that Day shall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *swear to the Lord of Hosts;* and in the 21 Verse, *The Lord shall be known to* Egypt, *and the* Egyptians *shall know the Lord in that Day; yea, they shall vow a Vow unto the Lord, and perform it.* I will enable them to know me the Lord of Hosts: That is in the Promise, just hold it up to him. *I will give them a Heart to know me that I am the Lord:* That says as much as, I will prevent them from rash Swearing, they shall have some twilight Views of me the Object of their Worship, who am *Jehovah Tzebaoth.* Here he hath undertaken for the Work, *They shall swear to the Lord of Hosts; they shall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it.* Vowing to the Lord is for his Glory and Honour, and therefore put in a Promise: I will be with them in the Work; they shall do it in a Way of Dependence on me; I will see to the Ongoing of the Work; *They shall vow, and shall perform it.* O then, just come in his Strength, trusting his Promise, and making Mention of his Righteousness, even of his only.

We conclude this Subject, by making some farther Improvement of this Doctrine. And we now proceed to improve it in an Use of Reproof to several Sorts of Persons. The Word of God is profitable for Reproof as well as for Doctrine; and we live in a Period wherein our Gold is become dim, our most fine Gold is changed; wherein sad and melancholy Changes have past upon the Church and Land, and wherein the Heathen have entred into the Congregation of the Lord, and pulled down

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the carved Work of his Sanctuary with Axes and Hammers; we live in a Day wherein a worldly Spirit has prevailed, a selfish Spirit does prevail, a Spirit of Error and Delusion doth prevail, a Spirit of Neutrality and Indifferency as to the Cause of Christ doth prevail, in consequence whereof, the Language of this Day is the Language of *Ashdod*; but the Language of *Canaan* is forgot by the Bulk, and therefore the Generation is astonished when they hear any of the Language of *Canaan* spoken, especially this Part of that Language, *namely*, swearing to the Lord of Hosts; but however this is the Language of the Church of Christ, of true Church-Members; and it is good, that, however few there be to speak this Language, it is the Lord himself who builds his Church in troublesom Times, and he will have his Work go on, whatever Men say or do against it: For he hath said, *Five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *shall swear to the Lord of Hosts.* Five Cities in *Scotland*, that was formerly like *Goshen*, but now turned like *Egypt*, by setting up their own Interest and Profit in God's Room, setting their Thresholds in the Room of his Threshold; But yet *five Cities in that Day, in the Gospel-Day, shall swear to the Lord of Hosts.*

But, to proceed, seeing it is the Duty of the Church and People of God, in New Testament Times, to renew their national Vows and Covenants; and that they may confidently trust a promising God, that he will enable them to perform this Duty to his Praise; then this Doctrine reaches a Reproof, in the *first* Place, to those who are for delaying and putting off this necessary Duty, till, as they think, there be a more fit Opportunity, and till they be so and so qualified for such a Work and Duty. But it must be considered, that they destroy

stroy and overthrow the very Nature of evangelical Obedience, who neglect plain and known Duty till they find such Frames, Inlargements and good Qualifications in themselves, for essaying to comply with the Lord's Call to Duty. We are to essay Duty, not in the Strength of our own Frames and Enlargements, but in Obedience to the Call of God, and in the Strength of the Grace that is in Christ Jesus, brought near to us in the Word of Grace and Promise, and not in the Strength of Grace received; for what is that but to say, we are to go through it in our own Strength, and not in the Strength of that unmeasurable Ocean of the Fulness of Grace that is in Christ Jesus? And as to the Fitness of the Opportunity, it may be observed, that these Lands have been putting off this Duty for more than these fifty Years for a more fit Opportunity, and that Opportunity they have never yet got; the Time has come for other Things, but not for this Duty. The Time has come for building our own Houses, but not for building the House of the Lord. See what the Lord saith in that first Chapter of *Haggai*, 2, 4, 5 and 8 Verses, *Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, This People saith the Time is not come, the Time that the Lord's House should be built. Is it Time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled Houses, and this House lye waste? Now therefore, thus saith the Lord of Hosts, Consider your Ways. Go up to the Mountain and bring Wood, and build the House, and I will take Pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord.* This is an Opportunity offered us in the Course of divine Providence, wherein his Hand remarkably appears, and is evident to be seen by all that have any spiritual Discerning; and wherein his infinite Goodness and Condescension is remarkably manifested. This then must be

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the very Time, Season and Opportunity for us to renew our solemn Covenant-Engagements to the Lord, if we consider, in the

First Place, how exceedingly God has been dishonoured among us, by all Sorts of Covenant-Violation. There has been an universal Violation of our solemn Covenants in these Lands; and that by every one of us, even by Persons of all Ranks. And it is very plain, that the Lord is threatning to send a foreign Enemy, with his Sword drawn in their Hand, to avenge the Quarrel of his Covenant. Must not this then be a fit Time and Season for us, to essay, by Grace, to renew these our Covenant-Engagements to the Lord? But then,

2*dly*. Let us consider that this has been the Practice of the Church and People of God in all Ages, both under the Old and New Testament, to renew their Covenant-Engagements after a Course of Backsliding and Apostasy from the Lord, as may appear from the Covenants entred into in the Times of *Nehemiah*, *Ezra*, *Josiah*, and others; and from the Practice of the *Macedonians*, who gave themselves to the Lord; and from the solemn Covenants entred into, in reforming Times, by the Churches in *Germany*, *France*, *Scotland*, *England* and *Ireland*.

3*dly*. Let us consider that Enemies of all Sorts are making great Progress at this Day. Popery, and Errors and Delusions of all Sorts are making great Advances, are increasing like a Flood, and are coming in with great Inundation in these Times: And it has been the Practice of the Antichristian State to propagate and spread itself, by Oaths and Covenants in all their Fraternities and Societies; and the Prelates in *England* have strengthened themselves, by swearing to their Obedience all the in-

ferior Clergy, in their Ordination-Engagements and Oaths of canonical Obedience. And ought not we, then, to use that Mean for bringing down *Babylon*, which they have abused and perverted for building it up, especially seeing it is a commanded Duty to renew our Covenants with the Lord our God?

4thly. This is a fit Season and Opportunity, because it is an Opportunity of God's Offering to us. He offers this Opportunity to make Trial of us, if there be a Remnant in the Land to own him. He is making a Trial, if there be a Party in these Lands to cleave to these solemn Covenant-Engagements, and, seeing he is making Trial of us, it is our Duty, at this very Time, and in this Season, to fall in with his Call.

5thly. This is the Time, Season and Opportunity for this Duty, because thus the Lord seems to be sealing his Servants in the Forehead, before the four Winds blow, and bring on an Hurricane of Wrath upon these Covenant-breaking Lands; therefore the Order is given to the Angel, *not to hurt the Earth, neither the Sea, nor the Trees, till the Servants of God be sealed in their Foreheads*, Rev. vii. 3. Why, then, do you think to know the Time better than as God doth point it out to you in his Word and Providence? If we duly consider Matters as now stated, there are many Things which may make us conclude, that, seeing God in his Providence has given us an Opportunity of renewing our solemn national Covenants, he intends by it to seal his Servants and People, and prepare them for a Storm of threatned Judgments; and there are evident Signs that God is purposing to avenge the Quarrel of his buried and burnt Covenants upon these perfidious and Covenant-breaking Lands, upon

on the Account of their ſhedding the Blood of the Saints of the Moſt High, and for the contrary Oaths and Bonds which have been taken, in former and preſent Times, ſubverſive of the Oath of God.

6thly. This is a fit Seaſon for this Duty, if we conſider, that not only is God hereby making a Trial of us, as has been ſaid, but he is hereby calling us to make a Trial of him, as you may ſee in *Malachi* iii. 10. In the 7th Verſe there is a Call to return to the Lord, tho' they had gone away from his Ordinances, even from the Days of their Fathers, and tho' they had robbed God, as in the 8th Verſe, and ſaid, *Wherein have we robbed thee? In Tithes and in Offerings.* Sure that is a juſt Charge againſt us at this Day. Well, but what is the Call in the 7th Verſe, *Return unto me, and I will return unto you, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts: But ye ſaid, Wherein ſhall we return?* That is the very Caſe of thoſe in the Day wherein we live. Wherein ſhall we return? ſay they. But be aſſured their Sin will find them out. *You are curſed with a Curſe, for you have robbed me, even this whole Nation,* Verſe 9. A great Sin is charged upon this People, that they had robbed God of his Honour and Glory; robbed him in Tithes and Offerings, in not bringing them in according to his Command, or not bringing them *in full*, or not bringing them *of the beſt*. They began ungratefully to forget him, when they were brought back again to their own Land from *Babylon*, and robbed him in Tithes and in Offerings. So our Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath been robbed in theſe Lands, in his ſupreme Deity, in his Crown-Rights and royal Prerogative; and has been diſhonoured by all that black Catalogue of Sins which you have ſpecified in the Confeſſion of Sins which is perfixed unto the

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Oath and Bond : But, notwithſtanding of all this, what is the Call in the 10th Verſe? *Bring ye all the Tithes in to the Store-Houſe, that there may be Meat in my Houſe, and prove me now herewith, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, if I will not open you the Windows of Heaven, and pour out a Bleſſing that there ſhall not be Room enough to receive it. Bring ye all the Tithes in to the Store-Houſe.* Here they are called to amend their Ways, and to reform from this Sacrilege, ſo contrary to the Covenant of their God ; and as we are many Ways guilty of Covenant-Violation, ſo we are called to bring Tithes into his Houſe, by perſonal and national Reformation : And *prove me herewith, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.* Prove me, by returning to me in the Renovation of theſe Covenant-Engagements, which you have broken and violated. We are to prove him, by adventuring upon his Grace alone : *Prove me herewith*, if you ſhall not find me faithful in all that I have promiſed ; *If I will not open the Windows of Heaven, and pour out a Bleſſing that there ſhall not be Room enough to receive it ;* pour you out the Bleſſing you want and need ; the Bleſſing of Goſpel-Humiliation ; the Bleſſing of ſelf-emptying Grace ; the Bleſſing of upſtirring Grace ; the Bleſſing of ſtrengthning Grace to pay your Vows ; the Bleſſing of ſupporting Grace under all your Trials ; the Bleſſing of through-bearing Grace in all your Straits and Difficulties ; the Bleſſing of Soul-ſanctifying Grace, and Heart-purifying Grace : *I will pour you out a Bleſſing, that there ſhall not be Room enough to receive it.* You ſhall ſee ſuch a Flood of Bleſſings about you, that whatever be the Trial of the Day, there ſhall be ſuch Plenty of Bleſſings ſuited to the Caſe poured out, that there ſhall not be Room enough to receive it. We have been ſo long trying the World, and the Vanities of this

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present Life, that we will scarce take Time to make a Trial of God. *Prove me herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts.* O, the Generation is not awakened to see the sad Case they are in by the Absence of Christ; they will not prove him; it is hard to know what will awaken them; sure nothing but himself. He it is who can make a backsliding Generation say, *I will arise and return to my first Husband, for then was it better with me than now,* Hos. ii. 7.

2*dly*. Is it so, as has been said? Then this Doctrine reaches a Reproof to those that are throwing Stumbling-Blocks in the Way of the Lord's People, and endeavouring to infuse groundless Prejudices into their Minds, against this necessary Duty, so loudly called for at this Day. I do not think it proper for this Place, to go through those groundless Prejudices. I shall only mention one of them, *namely*, that we swear to Falshoods in the Bond and Engagement to Duty; and the Falshoods condescended upon are just two, it seems they know no more. The first of these two is, That it is a Falshood to say that Mr. *Simson* maintained his Errors at the Bar of the Assembly in the Year 1717. And the Proof given for its being a Falshood is, that Mr. *Simson* declared his Adherence to our Confession of Faith, and disowned the Errors opposite thereto: But it must be known that Mr. *Simson* never confessed, or took with one Error vented by him; that he defended all his Errors before the Assembly, and had many Advocates in the Committees to assist him, at which some of us were Eye and Ear-Witnesses; and, when Matters came to a Pinch with him, that some were threatning him with Censure, then he declared his Adherence to the Confession of Faith, and his disowning the Errors opposite thereto; which was nothing but a Plot of his own, and of his Adherents, to save him from Censure, and

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to screen his and their own pernicious Principles: And his declaring his Adherence to the Confession of Faith, was in itself nothing to the Purpose, but a mere Blind, to deceive Men that wanted Thought; for all along he owned his Adherence to the Confession of Faith, and explained the Confession of Faith in a Sense consistent with his own Errors: So, since he acknowledged no Error he had fallen into inconsistent with the Confession of Faith, his explaining the Confession in an Agreeableness to his own Errors, was the strongest Way to maintain them, and to give Error the Victory over Truth. Wherefore those that would make Objections at this Day, to disturb People and put them from their Duty, would need to be better acquainted with the Facts they make Objections about, and understand the true State of Matters some better, as to the Truths of God, and the Wounds they have received, before they adventure so boldly to mislead others. Such another Instance they had before the last Assembly this same very Year, when a *Socinian* came before them; and because he pretended to adhere to the Confession of Faith, he came off in Triumph. So much for the first Falshood.

The other Falshood is, that it is asserted, in the Confession of Sins prefixed to the Bond, that the kind Reception Mr. *Whitefield* got from many, both of the Ministers and People of this Church, or any Entertainment his Doctrine got, was a Denial of any particular Form of Church-Government to be of divine Institution. But, if this be considered a little, it will come out to be no Falshood, but a certain Truth, that these Ministers and People, who entertained, heard, and encouraged Mr. *Whitefield*, after he had declared against Presbyterial Church-Government, and pretended it is a Matter of no

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Moment, whether the Government be Prelatical, or Presbyterial, or Congregational, providing Men hold by the Essentials of Religion, as they call it; I say, it must be a certain Truth, that those who encouraged Mr. *Whitefield*, after he had declared against the divine Right of Presbyterial Church-Government, did practically deny that Prebsyterial Government is of divine Institution; for they must, in the Nature of the Thing, either be reputed, in their Principle, to have given up with Presbyterial Government's being of divine Institution, or to have taken it upon themselves, poor sinful Mortals, to make free with God's Institutions, and to have boldly adventured to assist a stroling Priest of the Church of *England*, to pull down what Christ has built by his own Authority in his eternal Word; let them chuse which of the two they will. It will stand to be a Truth as long as Christ has a Church upon Earth, that the Supporters and Encouragers of that Instrument of *Satan* in the Land, have, by their Practice, been employing themselves in burying a Testimony for Christ's Headship and Royalties, and for the Order and Government of his House, directly contrary to the Word of God, their own Ordination-Vows, and our Covenants national and solemn League, which are Bonds they are under, which will not unty for them by all human Power and Authority whatsoever; so that they had need to take heed what Guilt they have involved themselves in, and how to have their Condition remedied, which I heartily wish for; and give themselves less Trouble in drawing out unjust Charges and Indictments against others. So that, for all that has been said, yea, or can be said, the Evils contained in the Confession of Sins remain to be Truths. Alas! true with a Witness; the Truth and Evi-

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dence of which, if Repentance prevent not, will meet the Consciences of the Men of these Lands at the Tribunal of God.

3dly. This Doctrine serves for Reproof to those, who, tho' they have put Hand to this Work, yet have not done it in a Dependence on the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in his Strength alone. It is possible there may be some of this Stamp among us, and therefore there is a Call directed to us, to look and consider how we have performed this solemn Duty of Swearing to the Lord of Hosts. You see it is a Duty pointed out in a Promise, as in the Text, *In that Day shall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *swear to the Lord of Hosts.* They shall swear to the Lord of Hosts; which is as much as if he had said, I will be at the Work to assist in it, and to carry it on to my Praise and your Comfort. How justly then are they to be reproved, who have not taken him along with them, by Faith in his Promise, in every Part of this solemn and weighty Work? But again,

4thly. This Doctrine serves also to reprove those who have gone about this solemn Work, and have not been single in their Ends; who have had any End whatsoever besides the Glory of God, which ought to be chiefly in our Eye in all our Approaches to him; and more especially in such a very solemn Approach as that of Vowing and Swearing to the Lord of Hosts.

5thly. This Doctrine reaches a Reproof to those who may be desponding, and are cast down as to the Performance of their Vows, thinking, perhaps, that they will never perform those solemn Ties and Engagements to the Lord. Why, this is a Duty he has called to; yea, not only so, but it is a Duty he has engaged to assist his People in, in his Cove-

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nant of Promiſe, both as to the making and paying of Vows; as you may ſee evident from the Text, and the 21 Verſe of the Chapter. And do you think that he is going to leave you to yourſelves in paying your Vows, now when you have been led out in his Strength, and in Obedience to to his Command, to make them? No, no, he will be with you; for he hath ſaid, *They ſhall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it.* Therefore let our Confidence and Truſt be in him, who is the Confidence of all the Ends of the Earth, and of them that are afar off upon the Sea. We may truſt him with all the Work, for, becauſe of our great Unbelief, he ſets down both Day and Date to his Promiſe. *In that Day ſhall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts*——*yea, they ſhall vow a Vow to the Lord, and perform it.* Again,

6thly. This Doctrine reproves thoſe who have gone about this ſolemn Duty, and are yet in a natural State: We know not but ſuch may be among us, and therefore this calls you all to try your State, how Maters are with you after this Solemnity. You ſee the Connection is plain in the Verſe where our Text lies, *In that Day ſhall five Cities in the Land of* Egypt *ſpeak the Language of* Canaan, *and ſhall ſwear to the Lord of Hoſts.* The Language of *Canaan* is a Language that cannot be ſpoken by thoſe who are *Egyptians*, who are in a natural State; and if any have been profeſſing to ſpeak this Part of the Language of *Canaan*, namely, ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts, and are yet in a natural State, they are ſurely, by this Text and Doctrine, very reproveable. But then, again,

7thly. This Doctrine reproves thoſe who have come raſhly forewärd, and have not, as the Lord

gave Capacity and Opportunity, pondered the Matter ſeriouſly and deliberately, as in his Sight: It is a very ſolemn Work, and ought deliberately to be pondered; but this is not to exclude the weak from joining in this Work, but it is a Duty that calls for due Deliberation from all.

In the *laſt* Place, upon this Uſe, this Doctrine reaches a Reproof to thoſe who are putting this Covenant of Duty in the Room of the Covenant of Grace, and who perhaps are thinking themſelves farther advanced than others, becauſe they have been joining in this ſolemn Work. Alas! that is ſad, if you are putting your Covenant of Duty in the Room of God's Covenant of Grace: If thou art not enabled to come beyond all thy Duties, to put all thy Work in his Hand, lipning for nothing on the Account of thy Performances, but leaning on him alone, and that Covenant that ſtands faſt with God's Choſen; if this is not the Caſe with thee, it is very ſad. If the Lord Jeſus, in his Perſon and Righteouſneſs, is not the alone Ground of thy Hope, thy Hope is vain.

We proceed now, by the Lord's Aſſiſtance, to conclude this Subject, by ſpeaking a Word to ſome different Sorts of Perſons. And,

In the *firſt* Place, a Word to you who have been admitted to join in this ſolemn Work of Vowing and Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts. *2dly*. A Word to you that have not yet been clear as to your Duty in this Matter, and are taking it to Conſideration. *3dly*. A Word to you who have been at a Communion-Table. *4thly*. A Word to you, who, by your Ignorance, have been debarred from joining in this ſolemn Work of ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts, and alſo from the Lord's Table.

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In the *first* Place, a Word to you who have been admitted to join in this solemn Work of Vowing and Swearing to the Lord of Hosts; and we would say to you, my Friends, in the 1*st* Place, *This Day you have avouched the Lord to be your God.* You have made a solemn Profession. You have said, with *Jacob* at *Bethel*, *The Lord shall be my God*, and this Soul, this Heart of mine, shall be *the Temple of the living God.* See then that you live within Sight of Christ; be concerned to maintain this Relation you have come under to him: *O my Soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, thou art my Lord.* Live by Faith on him as your God.

2*dly*. We say to you, as you have avouched the Lord to be your God, so the Lord himself *hath avouched you to be his peculiar People.* As to you who have been minting to go singly about this Work; no Thanks to you, it came from him, and the Praise must go all back to him: *He hath avouched you this Day to be his peculiar People.* Live on him, then, as his People devoted to him; live on his Word of Grace and Promise, live on the Grace that is in the Hand of the new Covenant-Head, look like his peculiar People, whom he has chosen and avouched as such, and who are devoted to him as such.

3*dly*. We would say to you, you are by Profession now a People that shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the Nations. You are a People that dwell alone, in the 1*st* Place, in Point of Profession; 2*dly*. In Point of Privilege. *Happy art thou, O* Israel! *Who is like unto thee, O People saved by the Lord?- There is none like the God of* Jeshurun, *who rideth upon the Heavens in thy Help; the eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath thee are his everlasting Arms.*

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Thou art warranted to improve, and just by Faith to call in all his Perfections, as thy Shadow to cover thee, and thy Shield to defend thee, in whatever Circumstances you are or may be in. You are also a People that dwell alone in Point of Duty, and you are to be a People holy to the Lord? You are to walk circumspectly, *not as Fools, but as Wise, redeeming the Time because the Days are evil;* you are to walk before him in the Light of of the Living; and in his Strength you are to make *your Light so to shine before Men, as that others, seeing your good Works, may glorify your Father which it in Heaven.* But,

4*thly*. We would say to you, you are now to gird your Armour, and arise and go up and possess the Land; look like Pilgrims and Strangers on this Earth, keep up a Warfare with all his Enemies; let your Life, your Walk and your Talk, and all your Conversation, be like those that have been with Jesus.

5*thly*. We would say to you, walk up and down in his Name; *Every one will walk in the Name of their God, and we will walk in the Name of the Lord our God*, for ever and ever.

Lastly, We would say to you, remember, in the Strength of his Grace, to pay your Vows to the Lord your God; *Vow and pay to the Lord your God; Let all that be round about him bring Presents to him that ought to be feared.* But,

2. We would speak a Word to you that have not yet been clear as to your Duty in this Matter, and are taking it to Consideration. We would say to you,

In the *first* Place, be humbled before the Lord, that you have been left to be in a Hesitation, and to be mistaken in a Duty that is so plain and clear

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n itſelf. Surely there is a Cauſe for this, and herefore be humbled for it, that you have not been careful enough in conſidering this Matter; be humbled that you have been too careleſs in putting in thy ſmall Mite for lifting up the Burden of his Praiſe, in a Day when the Generation are ſo openly denying him.

2*dly*. Do not think that you are leſs bound, becauſe you have not come under theſe Bonds and Engagements, than others who have come under the ſame; for you are bound by your baptiſmal Vows, and by our Covenants national and ſolemn League, tho' at this Time you have not gone the Length of renewing the ſame.

3*dly*. Do not think you may be more careleſs than thoſe who have vowed to the Lord; and do not think you are in leſs Hazard than thoſe who have been profeſſing more: *He that truſteth to his own Underſtanding is a Fool.* Theſe are Bonds of God's own framing, and he will obſerve thoſe that are ſlack in entring into the ſame, and help thoſe who are ſingle in the Matter to pay their Vows to the Lord.

4*thly*. Humble yourſelf before the Lord for your Neglect of this Opportunity; take with it on your Knees before the Lord; for we can declare you have Reaſon to be humbled for it, it being the Neglect of a preſent and ſeaſonable Duty; and look to him, that he may prepare you for this Work, when he in Providence may give you another Opportunity; and in the mean Time give Heart and Hand to him in ſecret: Commit your Souls to his keeping, as to a faithful Creator.

We come, 3*dly*. to ſpeak a Word to you who have been at a Communion-Table on the Mount of the God of *Jacob*. And, in the *firſt* Place, we ſhall

ſpeak

ſpeak a Word to you who art the preſumptuous Communicant, who had not the Lord's Call to go to his Table; and that ſuch are among you we have Reaſon to ſuſpect: For, in the 1ſt Place, are there not ſome who have come to the Lord's Table, whoſe Religion is all outward? It is not in the Heart: Perhaps you perform ſome Duties, but you neglect others more needful. Is there not a great Neglect of keeping the Heart, a great Neglect of feeding upon the Word of God? But then, 2dly. Are there not ſome whoſe Ends were not right in approaching the Lord's Table, ſuch as had only this for their End, to obtain a Name among others, but had no Concern to meet with him in his Ordinances? We tell you, your Ends were not right: Such as have no Concern to meet with him in ſecret Duties, ſuch as never did meet with him, and yet are not troubled about it, and have notwithſtanding come to the Lord's Table, your Ends could not be right, you are the preſumptuous Communicant; and we would ſay to you, in the 1ſt Place, Your Sin is great, you have crucified the Lord of Glory afreſh, and put him to open Shame by your Approach to his Table; you are guilty of the Blood of the Son of God, you are guilty of the Sin of *Judas* who betrayed him, and of the Sin of the *Jews* that crucified him. 2dly. We would ſay to you, O repent of this thy Wickedneſs, and pray God, if perhaps the Thoughts of your Hearts may be forgiven thee. We call you to repent and believe the Goſpel. *Let all the Houſe of* Iſrael *know aſſuredly that God hath made that ſame Jeſus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Chriſt.* Therefore believe in the Lord Jeſus, and repent of this and all your Tranſgreſſions, and you ſhall receive the Remiſſion of Sins.

Secondly,

Secondly, In ſpeaking to you that have been at the Lord's Table, we would alſo ſpeak a Word to the doubting diſconſolate Communicant. Perhaps you are filled with Doubts and Fears; you are doubting becauſe you did not meet with him at this Goſpel-Feaſt: But tell me, did you meet with him at any former Occaſion? What paſt at the Meeting? Did you ſay, with *Jacob* at *Bethel*, *The Lord ſhall be my God?* Was there a Song at the Meeting? Was you made to ſing with the Pſalmiſt, *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? And there is none upon Earth that I deſire beſides thee.* Was there a putting all in his Hand at the Meeting? *I know in whom I have believed, and that he is able to keep that good Thing, which I have committed unto him, againſt that Day.* Well, if that is the Caſe, be encouraged, *Weeping may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning. I will ſee you again*, ſaith the Lord to the Diſciples, *and your Heart ſhall rejoice, and your Joy no Man taketh from you.* Again, 2*dly*. Perhaps ſome are filled with Doubts and Fears, and the Occaſion of this is, you thought you had ſome Blink of his Countenance at the ſolemn Occaſion, but it was immediately gone. We tell you, Manifeſtations of his Glory are but very ſhort hereaway: Wait on him, by this he teaches you the waiting Exerciſe: He hath ſaid, *The Iſles ſhall wait for his Law, and on his Arm ſhall they truſt.* 3*dly*. Perhaps ſome may be ſaying, We did endeavour to mint at Duty, tho' in much Weakneſs, and we minted at joining in both the Duty of Swearing to the Lord of Hoſts, and the Duty of Shewing forth his Death till he come: But, alas! *tho' the Summer be paſt, and the Harveſt be ended, yet we are not ſaved.* We are in Doubts and Perplexities ſtill: We think, if we were brought the Length of waiting upon him, and

truſting

truſting in him, we would be as thoſe that walk at Liberty: But, O! we are in Doubts ſtill if ever we met with him. We would ſay to you,

In the *firſt* Place, the Lord will have us learn to glorify him by a Life of Faith upon him, even when he denies ſenſible Comforts and Enlargements. Thank and bleſs him that he keeps you about his Hand in the mean Time, and wait upon him ſtill. 2*dly*. We would have you to know, that altho' you have, at this Time, been explicitly owning his Cauſe, yet all of us have a deep Hand in the Defections and Backſlidings of the Day wherein we live: And the Lord will have us brought to a Senſe of our Sins, and he will have Self down in us; and, that he may humble us, he hides his Face from us. 3*dly*. You may conſider this as one Reaſon why there is not ſo much ſenſible Comfort, in going about this ſolemn Work as has been felt and experienced in former Times, when this Work was adopted by the whole Land. Why? This is one Reaſon, we think, becauſe it is only a Duty gone about in Corners as yet, and he is not going to keep Houſe with theſe few, and leave the reſt; and therefore there muſt be a Waiting on him, to bring the Land univerſally to go about this Work; and then he ſhall make every Man ſit under his own Vine, and under his own Fig-Tree. 4*thly*. Conſider that this Duty is but a Dawning, as it were, as yet, and we may have many Difficulties to go through in carrying on this Work; and he will reſerve more of the comfortable Outlettings of his ſpecial Preſence till we be more deeply involved in Difficulties, and then it ſhall be given in that Hour. Wait on him, then, *He is a God of Judgment; and bleſſed are all they that wait for him.* We ſhall,

Thirdly.

Thirdly, Speak a Word to the enlarged and mforted Communicant. And, *1ſt*. we would ſay you, try your Manifeſtations, if they be of the ght Kind and Nature; which if they are, then, you will lothe yourſelf, in your own Sight, for your Iniquities and Abominations; 2. If they be the right Kind, Chriſt is getting more Room with u than ever he got before; 3. You will be made maintain the Warfare with indwelling Sin, d to keep yourſelves from your own Iniquity. it, *2dly*. We would ſay to you, look out for me Trial approaching to you, take him along rough the Wilderneſs with you in every Step. *dly*. Be thankful to him, that he gave a Blink to ou in this dark and hiding Day, when ſo many are omplaining. *4thly*. We would ſay to you, hold he Beloved, and do not let him go, till you bring im to your Mother's Houſe, and to the Chambers f her that conceived you. Be concerned for *Zion*, hat no Man careth for; give him no Reſt till e make her a Praiſe in the whole Earth. *Laſtly*, We would ſay to you, *walk worthy of him unto all Well-pleaſing, being fruitful in every good Work; walk p and down in his Name, making Mention of his Righeouſneſs, even of his only; and let the Heart of every One rejoice that ſeeks the Lord.*

We come, in the *fourth* and *laſt* Place, to conclude with a Word to you, who by your Ignorance have been debarred from joining in this ſolemn Work of ſwearing to the Lord of Hoſts, and alſo from the Lord's Table; and we would ſay to you, in the *firſt* Place, O do not think that you may go away from this Place with a light Heart, becauſe you have not ſworn to the Lord, nor been at the Table of the Lord! I muſt tell you, your Sin is great; it is great if you come to this Table, and eat and drink unworthily, and it is alſo great

if you ſtay away; for you are then living in the Neglect of a plain commanded Duty; your Iniquity is bound up, to be brought out againſt you at the Day of your Death, and at the Time of your Appearance before the Tribunal of God.

2*dly*. We come to you with a Call from the Maſter of the Feaſt, and his Call to you is, *Whoſoever will, let him come, and take the Water of Life freely. Gather the People together, and I will give them Water. I will give them the ſure Mercies of* David. Our God is a giving God in Chriſt; he giveth ſome Things to you in the Cloſe of this Work; he giveth his Son to you: *To us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, whoſe Name is the everlaſting Father, the mighty God, and the Prince of Peace.* You have not a Heart to receive a given Chriſt: But thus ſaith the Lord, *A new Heart alſo will I give unto you, and a new Spirit will I put within you; and I will cauſe you to walk in my Ways, and to keep my Judgments and do them.* This is God's Record, *that he hath given to us eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son;* and he giveth eternal Life to you in his Son: *He that hath the Son hath Life.* And we are warranted to make an Offer of Chriſt to you, and to every one of you. To you Men, Women, God having raiſed up his Son Jeſus from the Dead, hath ſent him to bleſs you, in turning every one of you from your Iniquities. *Lift up your Heads, then, O ye Gates! Be ye lifted up, that the King of Glory may enter in! Who is the King of Glory? The Lord of Hoſts; he is the King of Glory. Selah.* O then open to him! *Whoſoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely. Behold I ſtand at the Door and knock; if any Man will open unto me, I will come in and ſup with him, and he with me.* If any Man in this Company, young or old, rich or poor, will open unto me, I will come in and ſup with him, and he with

me,

me. Put the Heart in his Hand this Night, and be employed in *Jacob*'s Exercise ; *he wept and made Supplication, he met with him in* Bethel, *and there he spake with us.* Thus saith *Jehovah, I will betrothe thee unto me for ever ; yea, I will betrothe thee unto me in Loving-Kindness ; and thou shalt know the Lord : Thou shalt abide for me many Days ; thou shalt not play the Harlot ; thou shalt not be for another Man, so will I also be for thee,* Hos. ii. 19, 20. & iii. 3. If you are for a Law-Righteousness, you are for another Man ; if you are for a Fill of this World, you are for another Man. But, O ! he offers himself to you, saying, *Thou shalt not be for another Man, so will I also be for thee. Come, now, let us reason together, saith the Lord ; though your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow ; tho' they be red as Crimson, they shall be as Wooll.*

May the Lord bless his own Word, and to his Name be ascribed Praise, Honour and Glory, for ever, *Amen.*

F I N I S.